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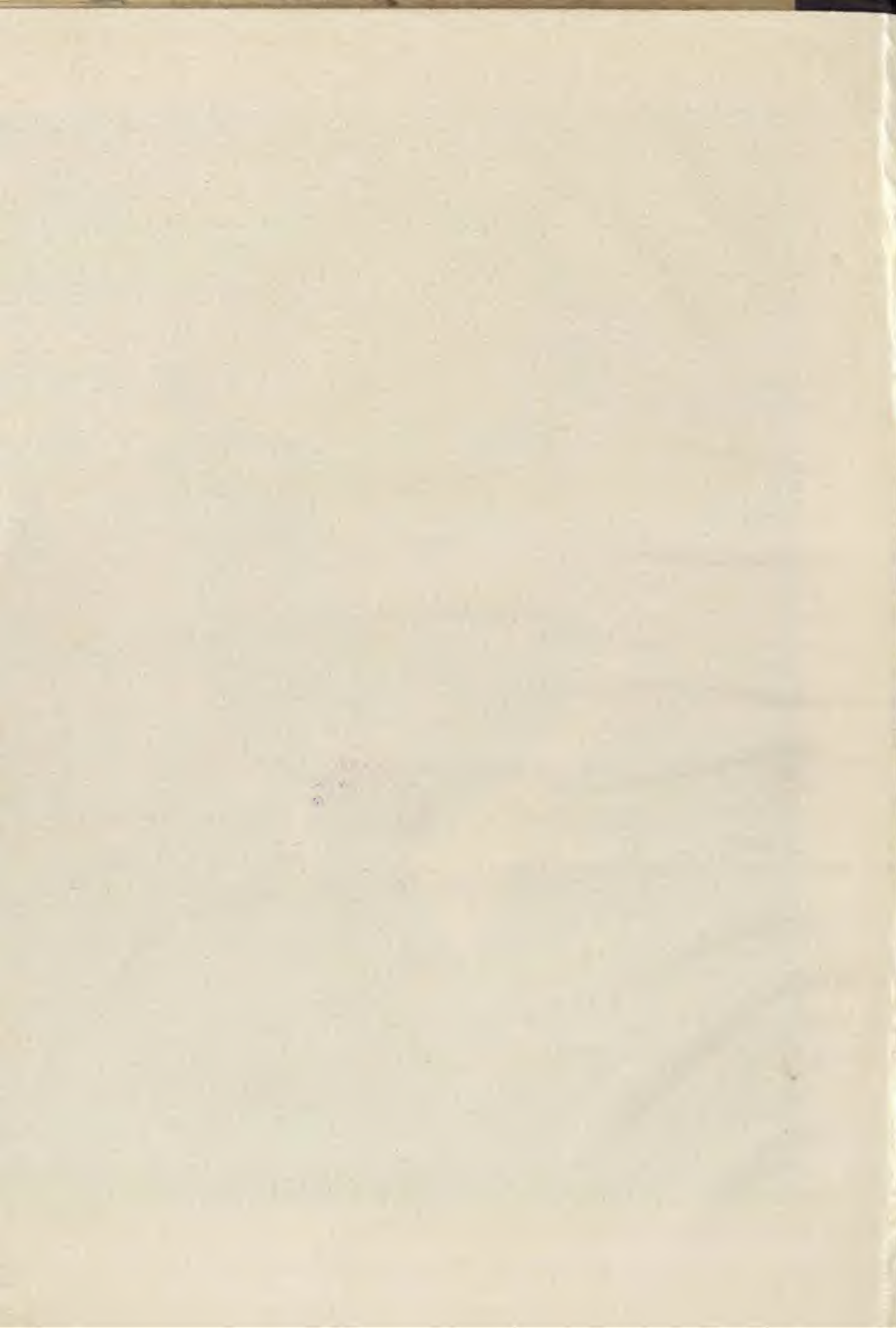
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Dr. B R. Ambedkar
Who turned the Wheel of the Dhamma 2500 years after Buddha



19/10/88

KAPILAVASTU IN BASTI DISTRICT OF U. P.

(A REPLY TO THE CHALLENGE TO THE IDENTIFICATION
OF KAPILAVASTU)

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By

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NAGPUR BUDDHIST CENTRE

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NAGPUR BUDDHIST CENTRE

NOTE

For the Buddhists at Nagpur twenty-sixth October 1976 will go down in history as the most memorable day on which they could offer their prayers to the corporeal relics of Lord Buddha, excavated from the *stupa* at Piprahwa in Basti District of Uttar Pradesh in India and exhibited in the Nagpur Museum. The relics were a source of re-awakening by bringing back to the memory the fundamental ethical principles promulgated by the Lord, more than two thousand five hundred years ago, for the emancipation of humanity, which appealed to the hearts of all classes of people.

2. The relics were, no doubt, brought to light as early as 1972, the Buddhists remained ignorant about them in the absence of publicity which they actually deserved. In order to raise the curtain, therefore, the Nagpur Buddhist Centre approached the author, Shri K. M. Srivastava, to publish a booklet on the discovery of such an outstanding value. Shri Srivastava was generous enough to accede to the request without caring to know the details of the activities and efficiency of the Centre.

3. The Nagpur Buddhist Centre is an organisation of Buddhists who were initiated into the Dhamma by the Mahabodhisatva Baba Saheb Doctor Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar at the sacred place of Deeksha Bhumi at Nagpur on fourteenth October 1956, two thousand five hundredth Mahaparinirvana Day of Lord Buddha. The occasion will stand as a great landmark in the history of Buddhism when about six lakh twenty-five thousand persons were inspired with the teachings of the religion.

4. Mahasthavir Dharmakirti was one amongst these inspired people, who preferred to renounce the world and adopt the life of a monk. During his visit to the Piprahwa ruins in Basti District of Uttar Pradesh, he was visibly moved to see the devastated and uncared for condition of the sacred site which he thought to be Pipli Kanan. The feelings of acute pain forced the monk to appeal to the Prime Minister of India for taking suitable steps to preserve the ancient remains for posterity. The Prime Minister lost no time in forwarding the letter to the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, for immediate action. The request ultimately reached the Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, Mid-eastern Circle, Patna. Owing to certain insurmountable problems the ancient site had to wait for a little more time when Shri Srivastava assumed charge of the post on twenty-eighth August 1970.

5. Touched by the feelings of Mahasthavir, Shri Srivastava decided to inspect the ruins immediately after the monsoons. The study of the remains, on the very first occasion by Shri Srivastava in November, developed an unflinching belief in his mind that the remains were of the ancient town of Kapilavastu. Intuition might have played a vital role in the impression; but it can be emphasised without exaggeration that the ultimate source of the intuition was the long and varied experience Shri Srivastava had in the line of excavation at his credit. The preliminaries of the excavation work at the site were completed on twenty-sixth January 1971 and actual digging commenced the following day.

6. In the year 1972 when Shri Srivastava was concentrating his attention on the *stupa*, a team of scholars from Japan and Nepal, who were excavating at Tilaurakot, paid a visit to the site to ascertain the aim of the excavation. They simply ridiculed at the aim of the identification of Kapilavastu and passed unbecoming remarks under the unfounded impression that Tilaurakot in Nepal alone could be Kapilavastu. Shri Srivastava was, however, not unnerved by the remarks and declared emphatically, "All of us are digging with the same aim. Let us see who is successful". Only a few days later caskets with the corporeal relics of Buddha were recovered from the *stupa* by Shri Srivastava on twentieth March 1972.

7. Though of course the relics were of paramount importance to the Buddhists, the question of identification of Kapilavastu continued to be open. On eighteenth March 1973 the resumed excavation at the site yielded the first terracotta sealing which clinched the issue conclusively. The total number of sealings in the season went up to thirty, all of them carrying the legend of Kapilavastu. Cameras flashed at New Delhi in May 1973 when a press conference was held to declare the discovery. The newspapers, however, published the news in a low tone. In 1974 a lid of a pot and more sealings inscribed with the same legend of Kapilavastu corroborated the identification further.

8. The discovery received a wide publicity in the year 1976 after the remains of the main township were uncovered at an adjacent mound Ganwaria. Very sore over the final identification of Kapilavastu, scholars from Nepal published two booklets against it hurriedly without hesitating the least to use the most derisive language. In the present booklet Shri Srivastava has aptly replied the questions raised by them to justify his proclamation. With this booklet, the Nagpur Buddhist Centre is confident, the shadow of doubt, to whatever extent it might have been, will wither away.

9. Much water has not flowed since the time the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in keeping with the heritage of the country, paid his ovation to the relics of Sariputta and Mahamoggalan, immediate disciples of Lord Buddha, which were handed over to the representatives of Mahabodhi Society at Victoria and Albert Museum, London, on twentyfourth February 1947. Moving from one country to the other the relics, in their last leg of journey, were carried by the great Prime Minister on his head from Sanchi railway station to the newly erected Chetiyagiri Vihara where they were enshrined on thirtieth November 1952. The spiritual instinct which nurtured the flesh and blood of the great man has left behind an indelible impression on our minds.

10. The inheritance of deep spiritual urge makes the Nagpur Buddhist Centre believe that the relics of the Lord will be received by the pioneers in the country with greater honour and enthusiasm. Vigorous efforts will be made by the leaders of the country to develop ancient Kapilavastu in the best possible manner. Not only the Centre, but the Buddhists all round the world, would remain indebted to the Archaeological Survey of India, particularly Shri Krishna Murari Srivastava, for such a momentous discovery. The Government of India would share the feelings of the Centre by duly recognising and rewarding this work of great feat, which has attracted a large number of tourists bringing handsome amount of foreign exchange.

11. Though the clouds hanging over the mystery of the ten *stupas*, erected over the relics of Lord Buddha, shortly after his cremation, are gradually disappearing, the work already done is only an insignificant fraction of what is yet to be done. The *stupa* at Kapilavastu is the third amongst those discovered so far, the remaining seven still await to see the light of the day. On this solemn occasion of the release of the booklet the Nagpur Buddhist Center, on behalf of the Buddhists all over the Universe, appeals to the Government of India to set up a project to uncover the mystery of the other seven *stupas*.

Nagpur
Dt. 1-1-1978

S. N. Dahiwale
Working Chairman
NAGPUR BUDDHIST CENTRE

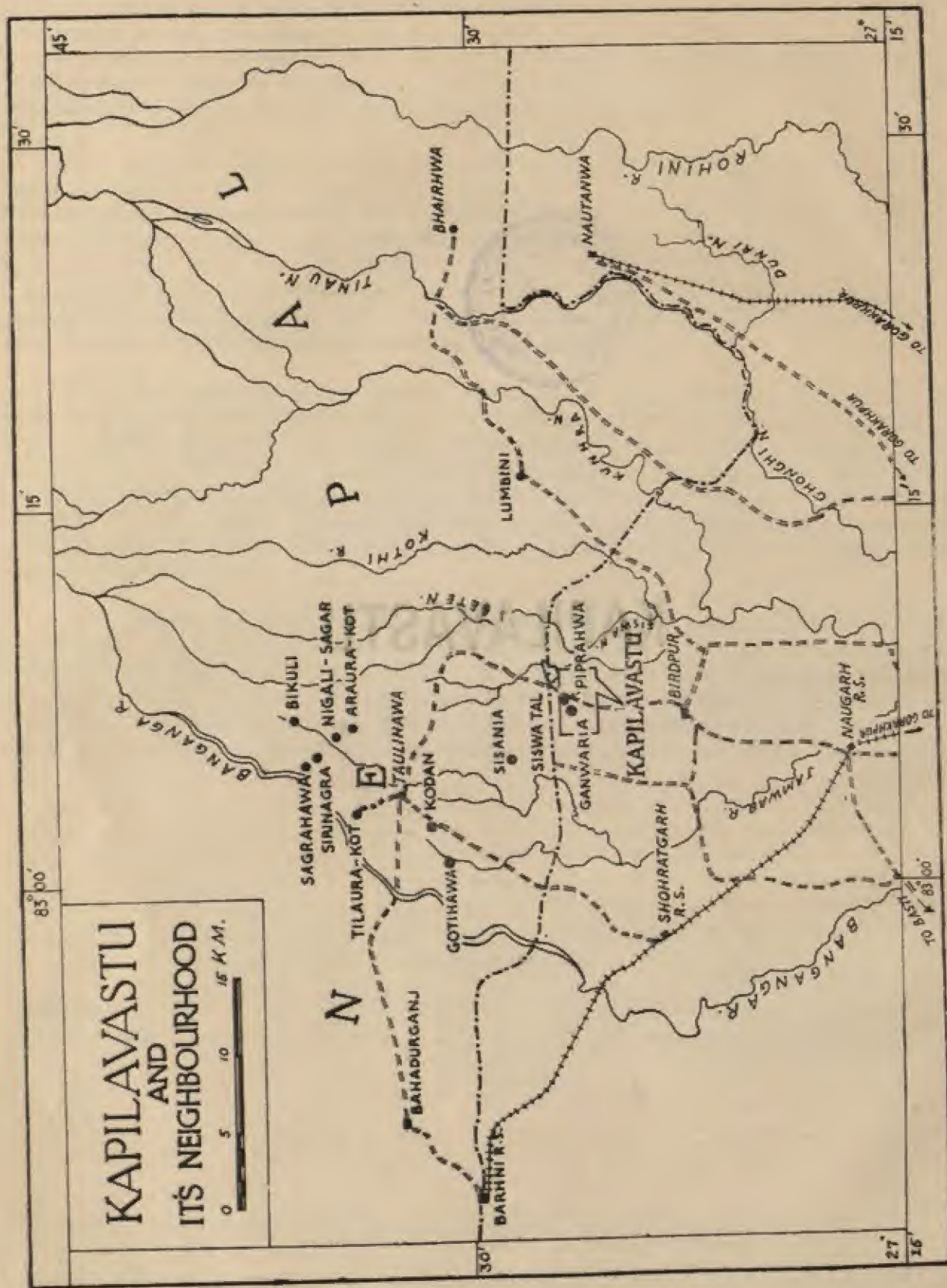


KAPILAVASTU

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KAPILAVASTU AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

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KAPILAVASTU IN BASTI DISTRICT OF U.P.

The identification of the town of ancient Kapilavastu was a subject of lively discussion amongst scholars in the closing years of the last century. Gautam Buddha spent the first twenty-nine years of his life at Kapilavastu, after which he renounced the world in quest of Divine Truth. Concentrated efforts were made by A. Fuhrer, P. C. Mukherjee, V. A. Smith and others to locate the town, particularly after the discovery of the inscribed Asokan Pillar at Lumbini and inscribed relic casket at Piprahwa (Cover page) in 1896 and 1898 respectively. Before that the attempts by Lassen, Cunningham, Carleyle etc. to locate Kapilavastu were nothing more than wild goose chase. Though the inscription on the relic casket coupled with the distance from Lumbini recorded by the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien were considered by certain scholars to be adequate enough to proclaim that Piprahwa was ancient Kapilavastu, yet the declaration made by A. Fuhrer in 1896 continued to outweigh the balance in favour of Tilaurakot. The text of the inscription on the relic casket found by Peppe in the *stupa* at Piprahwa is as follows :—

Sukiti bhatinam sa-bhaginikanam sa-puta dalanam iyam salila nidhane Buthava bhagavate Saktyanam

The general interpretation of the inscription was that the relics inside the *stupa* are those of Buddha. The physical remains of Buddha, immediately after his *nirvana* and cremation at Kushinagar in Deoria District of Uttar Pradesh were distributed amongst eight communities, one of them being Sakyas of Kapilavastu from which he hailed. After a few years Fleet came out with a new interpretation, revising his own as well, that the relics are those of the Kinsmen of Buddha (massacred by Vidudabha).

Piprahwa in Basti District of Uttar Pradesh is twenty-two kilometres north of Naugarh, a tehsil headquarters and railway station on the Gorakhpur-Gonda loop line of North-eastern Railway (Prepage). Piprahwa is only nine kilometres north of Birdpur which in turn is on the road to Lumbini from Naugarh. Situated at a straight distance of three kilometres to the north-north-east of Taulihawa, district headquarter in the central part of Nepalese *Tarai*, the ancient site of Tilaurakot is named after the village Tilaura. Taulihawa is twenty-one kilometres north-east of Shohratgarh, a town in District Basti of Uttar Pradesh and also a railway station on the Gorakhpur-Gonda loop line of North-eastern Railway. In regard to Tilaurakot Fuhrer said, "The discovery of the Asokan Edict Pillar in the Lumbini grove at Rumindei enabled me to fix also, with absolute certainty, the site of Kapilavastu and of the sanctuaries in its neighbourhood. Thanks to the exact notes left by the two Chinese travellers, I discovered its extensive ruins about eighteen miles of the Lumbini pillar and about six miles north-west of Nigali Sagar in the middle of a dense *sal* forest over a length of about seven miles from the villages of Amauli, Barduli, Harnampur and Bikuli, Tilaurakot and Ramghat on the Banganga and over a breadth of about three to four miles from the villages of Rampur, Ahirauli and Srinagar on the south to the villages of Jagdishpur and Nagravah on the north. The whole site is at present as dreary and desolate as when seen by Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang, yet every sacred spot mentioned by the two pilgrims can be easily identified".¹ In support of Piprahwa, on the other hand, the reputed historian V. A. Smith said, "My identification of the Piprahwa site with the Kapilavastu of Fa-hien rests upon the pilgrim's description of his itinerary. Professor Rhys Davids by a wholly independent line of argument arrives at the same conclusion that Kapilavastu is represented by the Piprahwa group of ruins. I am convinced that Professor Rhys Davids' argument is sound and that the *stupa* opened by Mr. Peppe really contained the relics of the Sakya sage, enshrined by his Sakya brethren shortly after his decease and cremation.

"If the correctness be admitted of the conclusion which Professor Rhys Davids and I have reached by wholly independent process of reasoning, it is plain that the Piprahwa group of ruins is for many reasons of the highest importance, and that the systematic survey and exploration of the locality by a competent expert would be a matter of world-wide interest."²

In spite of such a categorical statement made by a renowned historian it is really mysterious why no work was undertaken at Piprahwa. The significance of the statement was in all probability ensconced by the general acceptance by the scholars that Tilaurakot was Kapilavastu. Certain basic wrong conceptions of the scholars were at the root of this wide agreement. Of all, the most interesting was the

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distance of Kapilavastu from Lumbini recorded by the two Chinese pilgrims Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang. The distance furnished by the two was considered by the scholars to be at variance. On the basis of Hiuen Tsang's statement it was taken to be sixteen though the distance recorded by Fa-hien was limited to nine. The historians and archaeologists, somehow or the other, missed to note that Hiuen Tsang did not go to Lumbini straight from Kapilavastu whereas Fa-hien went straight. Hiuen Tsang adopted a circuitous route going first to *Sarakupa* (Arrow-well) and then to Lumbini, as a result of which the distance could not be expected to be the same. *Sarakupa* is the place where, during an athletic exercise, the arrow shot by Buddha in his childhood pierced the ground upto the feather causing a clear spring to burst out. The distance by a shorter route can always be more by a round-about route, but a longer distance can never be shorter. The statements of both the pilgrims are correct, but since Fa-hien went straight from Kapilavastu to Lumbini, the distance recorded by him should be considered much more valuable in locating the site. The distance of Lumbini from Piprahwa is exactly the same as recorded by Fa-hien.

• No credence was given by the scholars to the distance recorded by Fa-hien under another wrong presumption. They took it for granted that Sakya Chief Suddhodana, father of Buddha, was a great king. They did not try to read between the lines. Suddhodana was made a great king in the later Buddhist texts greatly influenced by the religious sentiments of the devotees. In fact there is no difference of opinion amongst scholars on the fact that the Sakya chief acknowledged the suzerainty of Kosala king Prasenajit. The idea that Buddha's father, Suddhodana, was a great king does not find a place in the oldest forms of Buddhist texts presenting family traditions. "The father of Buddha," according to Watters, "was no more than a member of Sakya clan, perhaps invested with some rank or importance as a chief magistrate, although this does not appear. He may also have lived in or near a place called Kapilavastu, but he had not a palace and did not reign there."³ Anand Coomaraswamy is also of the same opinion and says, "It is only in later legend that Suddhodana is represented as a great king; most likely he was in fact a wealthy knight and landowner".⁴ Similar is the opinion of Oldenberg who says, "A widespread tradition represents Buddha as having been a king's son. But the idea that Buddha's father, Suddhodana, enjoyed the royal dignity is quite foreign to the oldest forms in which the traditions regarding the family are presented to us, rather, we have nothing more or less to contemplate in Suddhodana than one of the great and wealthy landowners of the Sakya race, whom later legends first transformed into the 'great king Suddhodana'".⁵ Smith also points to the same conclusion and says, "There is no sound reason for believing that either he or his father ever enjoyed the position of regal magnificence ascribed to them by the pious imagination of later ages".⁶ There is a corroborative reference in Buddha's own statement made at the time when king Bimbisara offered to bestow upon him the whole kingdom. Buddha said, "Raja, near the Himalaya, is a rich and prosperous country, Kosala it is named, there lives a tribe of Ishkvaku of Solar race, the Cakyas they are called. To this tribe I belong; I am of Kshatriya caste."⁷ The unfounded image of a great king and his capital led the scholars to search the ruins of Kapilavastu in a very extensive ancient site. Incidentally A. Fuhrer happened to visit the site of Tilaurakot, eighteen miles from Lumbini, which fulfilled the requirements of their imagination. So far as the geo-physical location of Tilaurakot is concerned it is similar to that of Piprahwa.

With this rampant belief excavation was regularly conducted at Tilaurakot ignoring completely the ancient site of Piprahwa. The authenticity of the identification was deep rooted to such an extent that A. Fuhrer attempted to associate the names of eighteen Sakyas, including Mahanam, slaughtered by Vidudabha, the young king of Kosala and son of Prasenajit, with the structures at Sagarahwa on the false ground of writing in pre-Asokan characters. The undesirable attempt was, however, foiled in time by V. A. Smith who paid a surprise visit to the site when the excavation was in progress. Vidudabha massacred the Sakyas as a revenge on being slighted by them that his mother was a slave girl of the Sakyas.

There was no serious work on the identification of Kapilavastu in the first half of the present century. The consensus amongst the scholars that Tilaurakot was Kapilavastu made them complacent, though no concrete evidence to establish it was available. The lull was broken in 1962 when the Government of India decided to send a delegation to explore and excavate in the *Tarai* region of Nepal under the leadership of Dr. (Mrs.) D. Mitra. During the course of her expedition she conducted excavation at Tilaurakot as well. She was, however, not able to find any evidence to support the identification of Tilaurakot with Kapilavastu. In such circumstances she declared, "In fact the inscription on the reliquary found within the main *stupa* at Piprahwa coupled with Piprahwa's correspondence

with Fa-hien's bearing and distance of Kapilavastu in relation to Lumbini raises a strong presumption for Piprahwa and its surrounding villages like Ganwaria being the site of Kapilavastu."⁸

Amidst such vital and prophetic proclamations and unfounded presumed variation in the distance of Kapilavastu from Lumbini recorded by the two Chinese pilgrims Fa-hien and Hsuen Tsang, the author was tempted to tap the site of Piprahwa in order to bring the long standing uncertainty to a close. The excavations were started in 1971 immediately after the author was posted at Patna. In 1972 caskets containing the relics of Buddha were found in the same *stupa* (Plate I) which yielded the inscribed casket in 1898. These caskets (Plates II and III) happened to be at a much lower level than the inscribed casket and could be dated to fifth-fourth centuries B. C. Though the caskets were considered to be a substantial evidence to prove the location of Kapilavastu, the final stamp needed an inscriptional evidence. Excavation was, therefore, resumed in 1973 with the primary objective of finding inscriptions with the legend Kapilavastu. The crucial moment came when the excavation in the majestic eastern monastery (Plate IV) was in progress. Terracotta sealings, more than thirty in number, were collected from a depth ranging between 1.05 to 1.75 metres. The sealings were not found in a hoard, but they were scattered and picked up from various spots. One of the sealings was found kept in a niche of a cell. They were inscribed with the legend Kapilavastu which could be divided into two groups. One of them reads *Om, Devaputra Vihare, Kapilavastu, Bhikkhu Sanghas* (Plate V A) and the other *Maha, Kapilavastu, Bhikkhu Sanghas*. A third category of sealings, limited to two, carried the name of the monks.

With the help of the above mentioned sealings the question of the precise location of Kapilavastu was settled once and for all. The sealings also established that the *stupa*, which yielded the caskets, was constructed by the Sakyas over their one-eighth share of corporeal relics received at Kushinagar after the cremation of Buddha. The word *Devaputra* on the sealings indicate that the eastern monastery was built under the patronage of Kushan kings (for the order of monks of Kapilavastu).

In the year 1974 more sealings with the same legend were collected from the same monastery. The most outstanding discovery during that season, however, was a lid of a pot, inscribed with the legend *Om, Devaputra Vihare, Kapilavastu, Bhikkhu Sanghas* (Plate V B). There were several other monasteries on all sides of the *stupa*. Monasteries and *stupa* are always a little away from the main township and hence, to complete the picture of Kapilavastu, it was essential to expose the remains of the latter as well. Fortunately they were struck in 1975 at an adjacent mound Ganwaria, a kilometre to the south-west of Piprahwa.

During the course of excavation in 1975 two massive burnt-brick structural complexes with impressive projected entrances to the east were exposed. Of the two, the larger one, on the western fringe of the mound, is about thirty metres square. It has twenty-five rooms with a gallery at each of the four corners. In the last phase the number of rooms was raised to twenty-six with the help of a partition wall. The gallery at the corners was in alignment with the cardinal directions. In all there were five phases in the complex. The two rooms on either side of the entrance were most spacious. Generally, the flooring was made of brick concrete mixed with lime, though in phase III pieces of burnt-brick were also used. A ringwell having a diameter of 85 cms., was observed in the gallery on the north-western corner. With an open courtyard, about twenty-five metres square in the centre, the rooms and galleries were constructed all around it. The width of the outer wall was more than two metres and that of the inner one 1.70 metres on the top. The cross walls were more than a metre thick.

The larger structural complex (Plate VI A) embodied certain extra-ordinary features. Complete bricks were used only in the facing of the walls and the core was filled up with brickbats. The bricks used in the facing in the last two phases were rubbed in the pre-firing stage to present a beautiful appearance after firing in addition to providing more strength to the structure. Two projecting bastion-like structures were constructed to give a majestic appearance to the entrance. As an additional attraction three corners in each bastion were provided at the western end. In order to restrict the entry at a later stage, two walls, facing each other and projecting from the bastions, were raised at the easternmost fringe of the entrance. In front of the two walls there was a pavement made of brickbats with complete bricks used in the facing. The opening of the second entrance, however, continued to be 2.35 metres.

But for a few additional features the smaller structural complex, about thirty metres to the north-east, was, on the whole, similar to the larger one. It is about twenty-six metres square. A small room

in the north-east corner appears to have been used as lavatory or bath room. To maintain privacy the access to the room was provided through another small room opening in the central courtyard. Though the number of rooms in the smaller complex was less, the entrance was wider measuring 3.15 metres. In the earlier stages the entrance was towards the east. Later on, it was sealed with the help of a curtain wall and a narrow entrance, 1.20 metres wide, provided towards the northern side (Plate VI B). Unlike the larger complex the corner rooms on the south-east and north-west were the biggest and square in shape.

In the year 1976 excavations at Ganwaria were resumed to determine the planning of the town of ancient Kapilavastu. Extensive structural remains, corroborating once again its identification with the ancient township of Kapilavastu, were brought to light during the course of excavation. Besides exposing further the architectural members of the two massive burnt-brick structural complexes excavated in the preceding year, numerous structures, both secular and ecclesiastical, spread over a large area, were also exposed.

Digging deeper into the rooms of the larger structural complex, it was observed that the earliest inhabitants of the site lived in houses of mud wall, the ceilings of which were supported on wooden posts. At places, mud platform-like structures were also observed. The earliest occupational levels were very much disturbed by a series of pits. Soakage jars contemporaneous to the ringwell discovered in the earlier year and attributable to the first phase of the burnt-brick structures, were a new feature. The central courtyard, left unexcavated, was partially dug up to the levels of the last floor made of brick-jelly. A covered drain of burnt-bricks, with its outlet near the south-western corner of the structural complex was noticed in the courtyard immediately below the floor (Plate VII A). The five structural phases of burnt-brick in this complex were further confirmed during this season (Plate VII B). Though the planning as a whole was more or less similar, the alignment of the first three phases of the burnt-brick structures varied from one another. As revealed by squarish holes on either end of the entrance on the east, wooden frames appear to have been used to slam the doors.

In the smaller structural complex, one of the rooms just opposite the entrance was observed to have been converted into a place of worship with the help of moulded bricks. A beautiful terracotta figure of Lord Buddha in a unique *mudra* was recovered from the converted shrine. The Lord is seated on a double lotus throne, in a contemplative mood holding the fingers of his left hand with the right. Unlike the larger structural complex, the planning of the smaller one seems to have undergone changes in various phases. Brick-paved courtyard in the centre is also a new feature in this complex (Plate VIII). Though the earlier phases are yet to be ascertained, four structural phases have so far been discovered.

Amongst the secular structures a set of rooms of a house complex made of burnt-bricks was located close to the massive outer wall of the larger structural complex near the south-eastern end of the entrance. It revealed two main structural phases belonging to phases III and IV of the larger complex. A beautiful disc in fine-grained bluish sandstone found here belonged to phase III. It has a diameter of 14.5 cms. and is decorated with animal figures of elephant, lion and bull interspersed by floral and *chakra* designs, similar to those observed on the abacus of Asokan pillars.

Located further in a south-easterly direction was a block of a large structure comprising several rooms, besides verandahs and two courtyards in the centre. Like the larger and smaller structural complexes, this too had its entrance towards the east. Initially it was squarish on plan, but the extension at a later stage in southern direction turned it into a rectangle. Two main entrances, one each of the earlier and later stages of its construction, were provided through a flight of steps (Plate IX A). A small side door was also provided in its southern arm. Inside the complex and all around the courtyards, there were rows of rooms interspersed by narrow verandahs. The floor of the rooms, verandahs and courtyards were all paved with regular courses of complete burnt-bricks and/or brickbats. A long drain originating from the courtyard of the house of the earlier stage travels through the courtyard of the structure of the later stage and emits out on the southern side (Plate IX B). Time-lag between the two stages of construction appears to be very little. Considered in the light of its larger size, elaborate drainage and arrangements of rooms, it is presumed that the structure was a school, on the basis of the travel documents of the Chinese traveller Hsien Tsang.

Situated towards north of the larger structural complex, remains of a house representing another secular group of buildings were encountered. Several walls of successive structural phases were observed in a large area (Plate X). The last stage of the structural activity was represented by rickety houses of small brickbats. A huge earthen jar, a well and a cistern-like structure are some of the important remains. Of these, the last deserves a special mention for its constructional conception. Rectangular on plan, its inner sides were made tapering by laying the bricks in an off-set fashion, and brick-paved bottom. It is three metres deep (Plate XI). While it is difficult to discern its purpose precisely, ritualistic affiliation, however, seems quite likely.

Close to the northern side of the smaller structural complex, there was yet another secular group of structures represented by rooms of different houses in a line. As evidenced by several phases, houses in this part of the mound were raised in quick succession for a fairly long time. The rooms, running in a south-east north-west alignment, are squarish on plan. In the last stage of structural activity they were clustered in a clumsy manner. Like the larger structural complex, pit activity was marked in this area also in the earlier stages. Terracotta figurines assignable to Maurya, Sunga and Kushan art have been collected from this area in a large number.

Amongst the ecclesiastical group of structures, mention may be made of four shrines. Of these, three are quite elaborate, whereas the fourth one is comparatively small. But for the last, all the three are built near the eastern and southern ends of the smaller structural complex. Of all the four, the second shrine located towards the south-east of the smaller structural complex is the most magnificent (Plate XII). The importance of the shrine is emphasised by a large number of Lord Buddha's heads in terracotta recovered from it. A few walls of burnt-brick forming part of house complexes below shrine numbers 2 and 3 indicated that religious structures were constructed over the civic structures, a feature noticed in other parts of the township as well. It is in conformity with the statement of Hiuen Tsang. Being superimposed by the shrines, the lay out of the houses could not be determined. The shrines were mostly of the first-second centuries A. D.

The entire occupational deposit at Ganwaria is divisible into four Periods. Period I datable between c. 800 and 600 B. C., is characterized by black polished ware; fine grey ware; red ware vases and dishes with reddish rim, blackish bottom and greyish interior (Plate XIII B) associated with the Painted Grey Ware in western parts of Northern India; red ware bowls and dishes with a mirror-like polish occasionally painted in black dots and circles (Plate XIV A Nos. 5 and 6).

Period II is distinguished by the appearance of the Northern Black Polished Ware, a red ware painted in black horizontal bands (Plate XIV A Nos. 1 and 3) and other associated wares. A date between 600 B. C. and 200 B. C. has been ascribed to it.

Period III belongs to Sunga times with its beginning in the second century B. C. and end by the beginning of the Christian era. Period IV is characteristically Kushan starting in the beginning of the Christian era and ending in the fourth Century A. D.

The excavation at Ganwaria has yielded, besides other antiquities, a rich variety of terracottas. Of them, beautiful heads of Buddha (Plate XV); Buddha seated on a double lotus throne in a contemplative mood holding the fingers of his left hand with the right (Plate XVI); a head with a peculiar head-dress exhibiting foreign influence (Plate XIV B); warriors and drummer (Plate XVIII B Nos. 3, 5, 6 and 4); mother with a child in her lap; ornamented female figurines with elaborate coiffure and decorated anklets in their feet (Plate XVII); dancing figures (Plate XVIII A); animal figurines (Plate XIX A) and figures with elaborate drapery are very attractive. A decorated stone disc depicting bull, elephant and lion interspersed by *chakra* (Plate XIII A), similar to those on the abacus of Asokan pillars; a pair of heavy anklets (?) in copper alloy (Plate XIX B); copper and silver coins (Plate XX); terracotta stamps, dabbers, beads, bangles, wheel and gamesman; beads of glass and semi-precious stones (Plate XXI); stone-weights (Plate XXII A); chisels, sickles, arrow-and-dagger-heads, knives and a razor in iron; copper bowl (Plate XXII B); glass bangles; and a highly polished legged quern with a pestle in stone are the other important antiquities.

Excavation was also undertaken on a mound known as Salargarh located towards the east of Piprahwa at a distance of about 200 metres. The excavation brought to light a monastery of Kushan

period. Rectangular on plan, the monastery comprises several rooms in a row and also one behind the other. The layout of this monastery is entirely different from those at Piprahwa. There is no central courtyard and in a number of cases rooms are interconnected. The approach to the monastery is from the north through a flight of steps (Plate XXIII). But for a few copper coins, the monastery has not yielded any important antiquity.

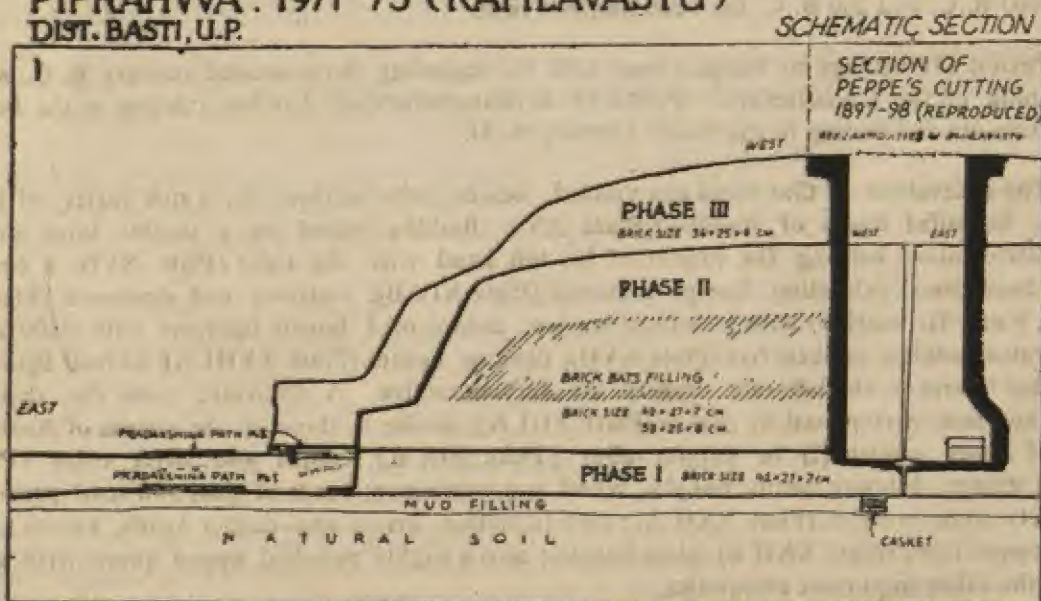
Close to the north of the monastery, a small *stupa* was also exposed. Initially, it was circular, but later on the base was converted into a square at the time of reconstruction. Keeping in view the size of bricks, the earlier *stupa* appears to be contemporaneous with the first phase of the *stupa* at Piprahwa.

In the face of such decisive evidences a number of scholars, largely from Nepal, have questioned the identification of the relics and Kapilavastu on the basis of sealings. They have in fact launched a campaign of calumny against the author and are indulging in damaging remarks by using the most undesirable language. The identification has been made a victim of political boundaries, without any basis whatsoever, because the line of demarcation between India and Nepal has its origin in the British rule and did not exist during the times of Buddha and his father Suddhodana. The series of question challenging the location followed by author's answers are given below for the benefit of scholars round the world.

Q. No. 1 :- Adequate evidence is not available to establish beyond doubt that the *stupa* at Piprahwa is the Nirvana *stupa*. Is it not just possible that the inscribed relic casket found by Peppe' and the caskets found by the author are contemporaneous ?

Ans. No. 1 :- The archaeological evidence is adequate enough to establish beyond doubt that the *stupa* at Piprahwa is the Nirvana *stupa*. The inscription on the relic casket found by Peppe' in 1898 contained in the massive sandstone box speaks that the *stupa* in which it was found is the Nirvana *stupa* constructed by the Sakyas. The sealings and a lid of a pot, with the legend Kapilavastu, corroborate it further. Even if it is taken for granted that the inscribed relic casket found by Peppe' and the original casket found during the course of current excavation by the author are contemporaneous, it does not stand in any way of the *stupa* being the Nirvana *stupa*. The archaeologists will have simply to reconsider the date of the inscription to reconcile with the date of the death of Buddha. The schematic section of the *stupa* will make it clear how the author claims that the caskets found by him are earlier

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than those found by Peppe' in 1898. The working levels of the earlier structures and the *pradakshinapath* and the later ones are different. Added to them is the shape of the circular pipe which turned into a rectangle at the bottom of the massive sandstone box found by Peppe'. The rectangle turned again into a circular one and went upto the bottommost course of the *stupa*. Had there not been two different phases the shape of the pipe would not have changed.

Q. No. 2 :- In a feature article published in Dharmayug of May, 1973 a photograph has been published with the caption: "A scene of a Vihara found in the Excavations at Piprahwa." Coming down to January 24, 1976, Shri Srivastava reprints this very photograph in the Times of India. This time the caption is, "The ruins of the palace of Buddha's father, Suddhodana". Why should he be in such a haste to call one archaeological object a Vihara on one occasion and a palace on another is a question that defies all understanding? ¹⁰

Ans. No. 2 :- The scholar who has posed the question has not cared to know that when the article in Dharmayug was published in 1973, the so-called palace complex of king Suddhodana, published in the Times of India (24th Jan. 1976) was not brought to light at all. The complex was excavated only in 1975 at Ganwaria, a kilometre to the south-west of Piprahwa. It appears that the scholar went through the news published in Dharmayug and Times of India only in a perfunctory manner. How he could not distinguish between the two photographs is a matter of great surprise. The prints of the two photographs are enclosed (Plates VI A and XXIV) and the author is confident that even a layman can distinguish between the two. The questioner would not have committed such a blunder had he gone through the articles published on the two occasions critically. Hence the statement "why should he be in such a haste to call one archaeological object a Vihara on one occasion and a palace on another is a question that defies all understanding," manifests his own haste and restlessness to justify somehow or the other his claims that Tilaurakot was Kapilavastu. It is always advisable to adopt a positive rather than a negative approach.

Q. No. 3 :- If the original casket is found in a stratum lower than the location of the Peppe's casket, would not the question arise whether the inscribed casket is at all related to Lord Buddha? ¹¹

Ans. No. 3 :- The inscribed relic casket found by Peppe' is also a pointer to the relics enshrined below in the *stupa*. The views of Sylvain Levi, in this connection, are quite pertinent. While discussing the inscription for interpretation he was of the opinion that it merely recalled a more ancient consecration and the inscription was engraved on the occasion of the reconstruction of the *stupa*. ¹² The inscribed relic casket is related to Lord Buddha and was kept in the *stupa* containing his corporeal relics at the time of reconstruction.

Q. No. 4 :- How could the relics of one and the same individual be conserved in two caskets belonging to two different periods? ¹³

Ans. No. 4 :- Instances are not wanting when relics of the same individual have been enshrined at two different levels e.g. at Devnimori in Gujarat. At Piprahwa itself Peppe' found one casket in the *stupa* at a depth of ten feet only.

Q. No. 5 :- Where is the pit line indicating that the *stupa* was opened? ¹⁴

Ans. No. 5 :- The *stupa* was not opened and as such there is no pit line. The donors of the second *stupa*, probably, did not consider it proper to disturb the earlier relics.

Q. No. 6 :- According to J. F. Fleet the inscribed casket found by Peppe' contained the relics of his kinsmen (slaughtered by Vidudabha) and not of Buddha. ¹⁵

Ans. No. 6 :- The interpretation given by J. F. Fleet corroborates that Piprahwa is Kapilavastu. He said, "And now we see the meaning of the curious nature of the articles, numbering more than seven hundred, which were found in the *stupa* along with the inscribed casket." ¹⁶ Fleet tried to impress with this statement that each individual object was meant for each Sakya killed by Vidudabha. If the statement of Fleet is accepted, it will lead to the same conclusion that Piprahwa was Kapilavastu and not Tilaurakot. Further, it must be borne in mind that the interpretation of the inscription presented by Fleet in the beginning also meant that the relics were those of Buddha. His earlier translation was as

follows :-

"Of the brethren of the well-famed one, together with (their) sisters and together with (their) children and wives, this (is) receptacle (or deposit) of relics of Buddha, the Blessed one, (namely) of the Sakyas." ¹⁷

Fleet came out with the second interpretation, probably when he was not in a position to reconcile the date of the inscription with the date of the Nirvana of Buddha.

A. S. Geden without an iota of doubt refers to the identification of Kapilavastu on the strength of the inscription on the casket. He says, "The inscription when read was understood to describe the relics enclosed in the vase as those of the Buddha himself; and it was inferred that these fragments of bone were the actual portions of the body of Gautama, preserved after cremation, over which was erected the *stupa* which had now been re-discovered. Dr. Fleet, however, interprets the inscription differently; and understands it to refer, not to the founder himself, but to the Sakyas, his kinsmen, many of whom, according to the tradition, were massacred, and their city wholly or partially destroyed, in revenge for a slight put upon the neighbouring king of Kosala. In either case the inscription would seem to carry with it the identification of Piprahwa with Kapilavastu, the capital of the Sakyas." ¹⁸

Q. No. 7 :- The terracotta sealings with a legend belonging to six or seven centuries subsequent to Mahaparinirvana of Lord Buddha are not decisive evidence in the determination of the identity of a place. ¹⁹

Ans. No. 7 :- As is generally accepted, there was no writing during the time of Buddha or his father and as such seals with the legend Kapilavastu of that period should not be expected. Piprahwa is not the only site where the location has been settled once and for all on the basis of sealings and a lid of a pot of a later period. A glaring example is of Sravasti. Ahichchhatra and Nalanda are the other sites.

Q. No. 8 :- The sealings indicate at best the affiliation of certain viharas with the Bhikshu association of the great city of Kapilavastu. The sealings are simply tokens of authority used in the transportation of merchandize from place to place. The chance entrenchment of such mobile objects like sealings should never be a clue to the identity of Kapilavastu. ²⁰

Ans. No. 8 :- The statement indirectly accepts that the monastery which yielded the sealings belonged to the Bhikshu Association of the great city of Kapilavastu. The inscription *Om, Devaputra Vihare, Kapilavastu, Bhikkhu Sanghas* means that the monastery was built by Devaputra (Kushan king) for the order of monks of Kapilavastu. A scholar like G. S. Gai has already observed that the sealings and the inscription on the lid of the pot "has shown that this place was ancient Kapilavastu." ²¹ The author wishes similar chance entrenchment at Tilaurakot to yield archaeological objects of such mobile character as terracotta seals which could help in establishing the claim of Tilaurakot.

Q. No. 9 :- Who knows one day the unexcavated part at Tilaurakot reveals some inscriptional evidences showing its identity with Kapilavastu ? ²²

Ans. No. 9 :- This is nothing more than appealing the world to wait for the final evidences from Tilaurakot instead of taking into account the proofs which have already come to notice during the excavations at Piprahwa/Ganwarla.

Q. No. 10 :- By all accounts the great city of Kapilavastu was a very extensive and prosperous city. The location of such a city should not be suspected in a site like Piprahwa with a *stupa*, some monastic structures and a very modest heritage of antiquities. ²³

Ans. No. 10 :- The religious sentiments have played a vital role in making Suddhodana a great king. It is a well known fact that he had acknowledged the suzerainty of Kosala king. It has not been recorded in any of the earliest Buddhist texts that Suddhodana was a great king. He was simply a great landlord and the chief of the Sakyas. Further, an important point to note is that the *stupa*-monastery and the habitation areas are never clubbed together. They are always at a distance from one another.

Piprahwa is only a part of the entire complex of Kapilavastu, representing *stupa* and monasteries. The remains of the main township have been exposed at Ganwaria, an adjacent mound, a kilometre to the south-west of Piprahwa. There are other mounds as well in the vicinity of Salargarh, Ganwaria and Piprahwa. So far as the heritage of antiquities is concerned, a reference to them has already been made on page 5 in brief, which will reveal that they are not modest but very rich.

Q. No. 11 :- Actually Kapilavastu was regarded as one of the six big cities of Aryavarta and was connected with roads from many sites and towns. ²⁴

Ans. No. 11 :- Had Kapilavastu been one of the six big cities in Aryavarta, Anand would have included it amongst the names of the cities where Lord Buddha should die when he tried to dissuade him from dying at Kushinagar.

Q. No. 12 :- There is no fortification wall and moat at Piprahwa, whereas the same can be observed at Tilaurakot. ²⁵

Ans. No. 12 :- Besides keeping in view the facts mentioned under Ans. No. 10 it must be reiterated that ramparts of such an early date as seventh-sixth centuries B. C. are not known and the fortification at Tilaurakot also does not belong to that date, but a much later period. Similar is the case of the moat. Joshi, remarking aptly on urbanisation has said, "Thus in his opinion, a fortification was an essential feature of an urban settlement; but, as a result of archaeocological excavations, we now know definitely that many early Indian cities of political significance e. g. Taxila, Sravasti, Vaisali or Ahichchhatra were without fortifications in the sixth-fifth century B. C." ²⁶

Q. No. 13 :- Legion are the evidences supporting the claims of Tilaurakot to be identified with the ancient city of Kapilavastu. ²⁷

Ans. No. 13 :- The site of Tilaurakot is yet to produce a reliable and credence worthy evidence to establish its claim for Kapilavastu. The identification of Tilaurakot with Kapilavastu by historians and archaeologists was nothing more than a guess work without any tangible and concrete proof. Similar statements regarding Piprahwa are not wanting particularly after the discovery of the inscription on the relic casket, but they have been established finally only by the sealings with the legend Kapilavastu. In this context the statement of V. A. Smith made immediately after the finding of the inscribed relic casket already quoted on page 1 is quite relevant.

Q. No. 14 :- It should be borne in mind that in between the pilgrimages of the two Chinese travellers there was a gap of hundreds of years, the one visiting in A. D. 399 and the other in A. D. 629. Travelling as they did over an alien land under conditions of untold hardships some differences in observation here and there should be but inevitable and therefore pardonable. ²⁸

Ans. No. 14 :- It must be emphasised that the author never accused the Chinese pilgrims on the difference in the distances furnished by them. As a matter of fact there is no difference at all. The historians and archaeologists failed to note that the two Chinese pilgrims did not adopt the same route from Kapilavastu to Lumbini. Hiuen Tsang followed a circuitous route, first going to Sarakupa and then to Lumbini and hence the distance is bound to be much more (see also page 2).

Q. No. 15 :- The geo-physical status of Tilaurakot is similar to that of Kapilavastu described in Buddhist texts. ²⁹

Ans. No. 15 :- The geo-physical status of Piprahwa corresponds very well with the description of Kapilavastu. There is hardly any difference in the environmental positions of Tilaurakot and Piprahwa.

Q. No. 16 :- The distance and direction from Lumbini, the known distance of Tilaurakot from the sites of previous Buddha, the location of Buddhist *stupas* and memorials within and around Tilaurakot and archaeological evidence found in the course of explorations conducted by P. C. Mukherji favour the identification of Tilaurakot with Kapilavastu. ³⁰

Ans. No. 16 :- The distance and direction of Piprahwa from Lumbini is exactly the same as recorded by Fa-hien. The distance of Tilaurakot from the sites associated with the previous Buddhas does not agree with those recorded by the Chinese pilgrims Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang. The site of the birth-place of Krakuchchhanda Buddha is still unidentified. So far as the birth-place of Kanakmuni is concerned it may be recorded that the pillar at Niglihawa (Nigali Sagar) is not *in situ*. There is no trace of *stupa* at the place. P. C. Mukherji has remarked without the least doubt, "The pillar is not *in situ*;

for Dr. Fuhrer was mistaken in saying so. When Major Waddell excavated below, the broken bottom was exposed, where no foundation or basement was discovered. Nor could I find the *stupa* of Kenagamana, which according to the Doctor's statement was at a short distance from the western embankment."³¹ The account of T. Watters is also very significant in this connection. He says, "On the pillar recently discovered in the Nepalese Tarai, near Nigliva, is an inscription in which king Asoka records that he had twice enlarged the tope of Kanakmuni and offered it worship. This information is interesting, but it does not tell us which of the great events in that Buddha's career the tope commemorated."³² Watters notes further that, "He (Hiuen Tsang) represents the inscriptions on the pillars as giving particulars of the decease of the two Buddhas, but the inscription on the Nigliva Pillar does not give such particulars."³³

So far as the archaeological evidence found by P. C. Mukherji in support of Tilaurakot being Kapilavastu is concerned, it may be mentioned that P. C. Mukherji was not able to present any incontrovertible proof to uphold his contention. Dr. (Mrs.) D. Mitra has also observed the same thing, independently. She says, "It may be remarked that Mukherji did not mention any movable antiquities from Tilaurakot specifically Buddhist. There is also no justification for regarding the structures exposed by him, except the one outside the eastern gate of the fortified mound of Tilaurakot, as Buddhist monasteries and *stupa*. The so-called sixteen-sided *stupa* with an attached portico was evidently a late temple of unknown affiliation."³⁴

Q. No. 17 :- Lumbini to-day lies in the same direction in relation to Tilaurakot as had lain in relation to Kapilavastu in the accounts of the Chinese travellers.³⁵

Ans. No. 17 :- The direction and distance of Piprahwa from Lumbini is much more in conformity with the account of the Chinese pilgrims. See also Ans. No. 14.

Q. No. 18 :- The Indian archaeologist (the author) in his feature article in *Dharmayug* has written about Lumbini thus: "Lumbini, the birth-place of Lord Buddha, lies in Nepal Terai. Nigali Sagar is at a distance of fourteen miles from Lumbini, Kapilavastu was not far away from these places." Thus even his own pronouncement lends support to the view that Tilaurakot may be identifiable with the ancient city of Kapilavastu.³⁶

Ans. No. 18 :- The pronouncement made in *Dharmayug* does not in any way lend support to the view that Tilaurakot was Kapilavastu. Had that been the case the author would not have proclaimed that Piprahwa was the likely site of ancient Kapilavastu.

Q. No. 19 :- Indeed the grandeur of the city-complex unearthed in Tilaurakot should confirm the aptness of the place to be called Maha-Kapilavastu in days of yore.³⁷

Ans. No. 19 :- The archaeologist has so far been clamouring that Tilaurakot was Kapilavastu; but now he wants to establish that Tilaurakot was Maha-Kapilavastu. It appears that he wants to convey indirectly that the sealings with the legend Maha-Kapilavastu found at Piprahwa were transported from Tilaurakot. If so, he will have to present convincing evidence for it, at least a single sealing of Maha-Kapilavastu from Tilaurakot.

Q. No. 20 :- After the foundation of the Mahabhikshusangha at Kapilavastu the worshippers of the Buddha's commemorative chaitya kept good contact with the central Sangha office of Kapilavastu at Tilaurakot and they very often used to visit the monasteries and the *stupa* of the capital town despite its wanton destruction by king Vidudabha of Kosala.³⁸

Ans. No. 20 :- Tilaurakot continued to be prosperous in the first-second centuries A. D. to which period the sealings with the legend Kapilavastu yielded by Piprahwa belonged. In such a situation Kapilavastu sealings should have been found at Tilaurakot if at all there was any existence of a central Sangha office at Tilaurakot.

Q. No. 21 :- Finds corresponding to the description of the Chinese travellers are to be found abundantly in and around Tilaurakot. On the other hand, no find of any real significance has yet been reported from the excavation in Piprahwa.³⁹

Ans. No. 21 :- There is no dearth of antiquities of great significance from the excavations at Piprahwa and Ganwaria. Besides the relic caskets and terracotta sealings the excavations have yielded a rich variety of antiquities, the most important of which have been mentioned in brief on page 5 and need not be repeated here.

Q. No. 22 :- The Chinese travellers are silent on the Nirvana stupa.⁴²

Ans. No. 22 :- They are not silent on the Nirvana stupa. Hiuen Tsang gives the position of Nirvana stupa in relation to the town of Kapilavastu. Further, their silence, if at all, is not going to help in identifying Tilaurakot as Kapilavastu.

Q. No. 23 :- Emperor Asoka who had gone on pilgrimage to the birth-places of Sakyamuni Buddha and Kanakmuni Buddha was not known to have visited Piprahwa.⁴¹

Ans. No. 23 :- If emperor Asoka is not known to have visited Piprahwa, the same is true in the case of Tilaurakot as well.

Q. No. 24 :- The city of ancient Kapilavastu was said to be situated on the bank of a river. The present Banganga river is ancient Bhagirathi which flowed by the side of Kapilavastu.⁴³

Ans. No. 24 :- The Buddhist texts are not unanimous that Kapilavastu was situated on the bank of a river. The reference is always to the dispute, between Sakyas and Koliyans, over the waters of the river Rohini, which acted as a boundary dividing the states of the two communities. It is only in Dulva that the river Bhagirathi is said to flow by the side of Kapilavastu. The grounds on which Bhagirathi has been associated with Banganga river require elucidation. There is a rivulet by the name of Siswa near Piprahwa and two lakes viz. Siswa and Majhauri. Kapilavastu is also said to have been situated on the side of a lake. While writing on Kapila rishi after whom Kapilavastu was named Malalasekera says, "When the sons of Okkaka went into voluntary exile and looking for a spot on which to found a city, they came upon Kapila in his hermitage in Himava by the side of a lake."⁴³ In addition to all these facts the Chinese pilgrims do not speak of any river by the side of Kapilavastu. The position of the river Rapti as described in Buddhist texts in relation to Kapilavastu agrees entirely with Piprahwa. According to the texts the Sakya state was bounded on the north by the Himalayas, on the east by the river Rohini and on the west and south by the Rapti. The situation of Tilaurakot does not correspond with the above.

Q. No. 25 :- The name of one of the tributary streams of the Banganga, which is popularly known as "Kaila Nadi", is also worth considering in this context. The word Kaila is very likely to be a corrupt form of 'Kapila nadi' flowing down to Kapilavastu.⁴⁴

Ans. No. 25 :- There is no basis to associate the name of Kaila with Kapila. Besides, Tilaurakot is located on the bank of Banganga and not Kaila. The scholars should in the first instance decide whether they want to associate Kaila with Kapila leading ultimately to Kapilavastu or Banganga with Bhagirathi on the bank of which, according to them, Kapilavastu was located.

Q. No. 26 :- Lumbini is described to lie in between Kapilavastu and Devadaha, the capital of the Koliyans. Such is exactly the relative position of Tilaurakot in relation to Lumbini and Devadaha. On no account could Piprahwa claim to occupy such a relative position.⁴⁵

Ans. No. 26 :- The location of Devadaha is still a mystery and as such the claims are ridiculous.

Q. No. 27 :- Northern Black Polished Ware, Painted Grey Ware and thousands and thousands of antiquities of the Maurya, Sunga and Kushan Periods have already been excavated in and around Tilaurakot. Thus even on the basis of available data the collected relics and antiquities can be dated from the eighth and seventh century B. C. down to the third century A. D.⁴⁶

Ans. No. 27 :- The antiquity of Piprahwa/Ganwaria also goes to the same period as claimed for Tilaurakot. 'Thousands and thousands of antiquities' is a very vague term. Better it would be to make specific mention of at least a few important antiquities as done above in the case of Piprahwa/Ganwaria (Page 5).

Q. No. 28 :- Piprahwa does not reveal a single sherd of Painted Grey Ware and as such the beginnings based on the relic caskets cannot be pushed back to eighth century B. C.⁴⁷

Ans. No. 28 :- The excavators of Tilaurakot are probably not aware that the Painted Grey Ware found there is not the genuine Painted Grey Ware occurring at the sites in Indo-Gangetic basin. Again, the type of Painted Grey Ware encountered at Tilaurakot is very well present at Ganwaria, the town-site of Kapilavastu.

Q. No. 29 :- Lastly, a hoard of coins, some of which are pre-Mauryan silver punch-marked coins the accepted date of which is seventh century to second century B. C. are dug out in Tilaurakot.⁴⁸

Ans. No. 29:- A date as early as seventh century B. C. cannot be assigned to silver punch-marked coins. Silver punch-marked coins are not wanting at Piprahwa/Ganwaria as well.

Q. No. 30 :- Dr. (Mrs.) D. Mitra in her report on her very limited excavation at Tilaurakot in the year 1962 has, in clear terms, expressed the view that it should be right and proper to accept Tilaurakot as a city at least as old as the sixth century B. C. She even hinted at the possibility of its being still older.⁴⁹

Ans. No. 30 :- Dr. (Mrs.) D. Mitra might have said, 'it should be right and proper to accept Tilaurakot as a city at least as old as the sixth century B. C.,' but she never said that Tilaurakot was Kapilavastu. On the other hand, she proclaimed that Piprahwa/Ganwaria is likely to be the site of ancient Kapilavastu, when she did not find any antiquity at Tilaurakot to associate the site with Kapilavastu (see also pages 2 and 3). Any city of sixth century B. C. cannot be called Kapilavastu as such.

Q. No. 31 :- Although Dr. (Mrs.) D. Mitra challenged the identification of Tilaurakot with Kapilavastu but she does not mention about what this enormous site with antiquities dating back from the Painted Grey Ware phase (i. e. circa ninth century B. C.) is about.⁵⁰

Ans. No. 31 :- It was not binding on Dr. (Mrs.) D. Mitra to identify the ancient site of Tilaurakot before challenging its identification with Kapilavastu. It is not obligatory on the part of the author as well.

Q. No. 32 :- The Indian archaeologist, it may be recalled, has been projecting his views on Tilaurakot based only on the findings of the excavations of the year 1962.⁵¹

Ans. No. 32 :- It has already been stated that the excavations at Tilaurakot have not yielded a single tangible evidence, so far, to establish the identity with Kapilavastu.

Q. No. 33 :- The excavation at Tilaurakot has just begun and no one just at present can say how long it will take to complete it.⁵²

Ans. No. 33 :- On the one hand, it is claimed that excavations at Tilaurakot are being conducted since decades establishing thereby, on the basis of rich antiquities, that it is Kapilavastu; and on the other it is said that the excavation at Tilaurakot has just begun. The archaeologists will have to decide as to which of the two statements is correct, because one of the scholars from Nepal lamented and said, "Now the excavated materials, charts, photographs etc. of several years, as these got burnt in the fire of Singhadarbar that smeared it, we cannot say to the world about what antiquities did we possess till recently as to the glorification aspect of the site of Tilaurakot."⁵³ As a matter of fact the longstanding claims of Tilaurakot being Kapilavastu should have been established by illustrated reports before the antiquities were engulfed in a fire in place of hammering over it, particularly after the discoveries at Piprahwa/Ganwaria.

Q. No. 34 :- Principles of archaeology forbid the acceptance of the truth of a conclusion arrived at from one lone or inadequate premise. For example, from one single fact that a Nepalese coin has been found in New Jersey in USA or Bodhgaya in India, we shall never be permitted to jump into any conclusion regarding the extent of Nepal's territorial jurisdiction.⁵⁴

Ans. No. 34 :- The conclusion is not based on one lone or inadequate premise. The number of sealings from Piprahwa is not restricted to one. The total number is thirty-eight found from different spots in the eastern monastery of Piprahwa. The depth in which they occur also ranges between 1.05 and 1.75 metres. One sealing was found kept in a niche of a cell. Besides the sealings one lid of a pot inscribed with the legend Kapilavastu also supports the identification. Clay materials like the terracotta sealings and lid of a pot are not so precious as to be carried from one place to the other like a coin. The sealings and the lid of the pot with the legend Kapilavastu and the relic caskets are only corroborative and final evidences for Piprahwa being the site of ancient Kapilavastu. A large number of sites have been identified only on the basis of sealings bearing the name of the site or some connected legend.

Q. No. 35 :- The stupas described to have been located within, without and around the old fortification wall of Kapilavastu in the travelogues of the Chinese pilgrims and Buddhistic annals and traditions have been unearthed within the periphery of Tilaurakot. The Indian archaeologist should have taken note of the fact that many stupas consecrating various events of the life of Lord Buddha have been found within, without and around Tilaurakot.⁵⁵



Ans. No. 35 :- So far as the *stupas* consecrating the various events of the life of Lord Buddha is concerned the remarks of Dr.(Mrs.)D. Mitra in paragraph 2 under Answer No. 16 on page no. 9 may please be seen. Further, there may be many *stupas* consecrating various events at Tilaurakot, but the most important, the Nirvana *stupa*, is only at Piprahwa. This is the *stupa* constructed by the Sakyas over the corporeal relics of Buddha after his Nirvana at Kushinagar. Can Tilaurakot boast of any such *stupa*?

Q. No. 36 :- In his travelogue Hiuen Tsang had given an account of the place where the Sakya massacre had taken place. That place was not far removed from Tilaurakot.⁵⁶

Ans. No. 36 :- It is necessary to point out that the attempt of Fuhrer to associate the names of eighteen Sakyas including Mahanam with the Sakyas massacred by Vidudabha, with the structures at Sagrahwa near Tilaurakot on the false ground of writing in Pre-Asokan characters was fortunately foiled in time by V. A. Smith who paid a surprise visit to the site when the excavation was in progress. The forgery was thus exposed to public.

Q. No. 37 :- Annals of Buddhism abound with reference to the destruction of Kapilavastu by Vidudabha and the subsequent flight of the Sakyas. After this event a new Kapilavastu was founded, which may be Piprahwa.⁵⁷

Ans. No. 37 :- It has not been recorded in any text that Kapilavastu was completely destroyed and all the Sakyas were massacred. P. C. Mukherji's observation is very clear on this issue. He says, "That Kapilavastu was not, however, altogether destroyed, is proved by the fact, that the giving of garments to needy brethren, the prohibition against the wearing of ornaments by the Bhikshunis (nuns), and the permission to ordain boys at seven years of age, are all referred to the state of affairs at Kapilavastu immediately after its destruction by Vidudabha. And many Bhikshus seem to have been left uninjured. When the Buddha died at Kushinagara in Anjana era 148-543 B. C., the Sakyas with an army went there to claim a share of his relics. They brought one-eighth of the Buddha's *sariras* and erected a *stupa* over it."⁵⁸

The confusion of two Kapilavastus had its root in the unfounded belief that there is a difference in the distance of Kapilavastu from Lumbini as recorded by the two Chinese pilgrims. As a matter of fact there was no difference at all, because Fa-hien went straight to Lumbini from Kapilavastu whereas Hiuen Tsang first went to *Sarakupa* and then to Lumbini. Naturally the distance in both cases will vary. V. A. Smith tried to reconcile the assumed difference and said, "At last a process of reasoning such as I have sketched above suddenly brought me to the unexpected conclusion that Piprahwa is the Kapilavastu of Fa-hien, whereas the city around Tilaurakot is the Kapilavastu of Hiuen Tsang".⁵⁹ Smith did not support the theory of two Kapilavastus, though of course he could not analyse the assumed difference when he said, "If I am asked the reason why, in or about A. D. 406, Piprahwa was regarded as representing Kapilavastu, whereas in A. D. 635 the city on the Banganga was regarded as representing the same place, I can only reply that I do not know the reason, and plead ignorance concerning events which occurred fifteen hundred years ago is excusable."⁶⁰ When the scholar who gave birth to the theory of two Kapilavastus was not himself in a position to justify it, there is no basis to hammer on the existence of two cities named as Kapilavastu. It should be forgotten once and for all.

Q. No. 38 :- When Gautama Buddha died at Kushinagar, the Sakyas did not live at Kapilavastu, but at many places, those, and perhaps a large number of them, who inhabited not very far away from the site of the old capital, found the share, brought it to the town of their occupation and built the *stupa* over the corporeal relics. This is the reason why we find the *stupa* of Lord Buddha built at Piprahwa.⁶¹

Ans. No. 38 :- The second part of the question establishes in the first instance the author's contention that the *stupa* at Piprahwa in which caskets have been found is the Nirvana *stupa*. So far as the argument of the abandonment of Kapilavastu is concerned, it may be repeated that it is not mentioned in any text that Vidudabha destroyed the town completely, which resulted in the founding of a new Kapilavastu. One of the scholars from Nepal emphatically says, "I accept Mr. Srivastava's view that both Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang identified the same place as Kapilavastu."⁶² According to the above question the Sakyas fled to many places and at the time of the death of Buddha they did not live at Kapilavastu. It appears ridiculous to believe that the corporeal relics of Lord Buddha were enshrined in the *stupa* at a Kapilavastu with which he had no relation. This fallacy is much more highlighted in the circumstances that the original Kapilavastu, where Buddha resided for twenty-nine years, did not get any share of the relics. Further, the scholar who has posed the question is not certain by himself regarding

the place of the Sakyas when he says that the Sakyas did not live at Kapilavastu, but at many places, those, and perhaps a large number of them, who inhabited not very far away from the site of the old capital, found the share, brought it to the town of their occupation and built the *stupa* over the corporeal relics. In addition, let it be made clear that according to the reports of the excavation at Tilaurakot the occupation continued there till third century A. D. and there are no indications of destruction in the sixth-fifth centuries B. C. In such circumstances is it not beyond comprehension to digest the fact of complete desertion of Kapilavastu before the death of Lord Buddha?

Q. No. 39 :- What I feel is that when the downtrodden, diseased and lamenting Sakyas began abandoning Kapilavastu, they felt that the water of the Arrow-well (*Sarakupa*), which had been curing the diseases of the miserable patients since several years, would help them in their redemption from the diseases and the pains owing to the sack of the city and its people by Vidudabha. Therefore many of them migrated there and began living at Piprahwa until the abandonment of the site in the fifth century.⁶³

Ans. No. 39 :- There was a distance of about six miles between Kapilavastu and *Sarakupa* and therefore both the places cannot be one. While describing Kapilavastu Hiuen Tsang records, "from this 30 li south-east is a small *stupa*. Here there is a fountain, the waters of which are as clear as a mirror. Here it was, during the athletic contest, that the arrow of the prince, after penetrating the targets, fell and buried itself upto the feather in the ground, causing a clear spring of water to flow forth. Common tradition has called this the arrow fountain (*Sarakupa*)."⁶⁴ T. Watters also translates the record of Hiuen Tsang in almost the same words which are, "His arrow pierced the drums, went thirty-two li to the south-east and penetrated the ground upto the top, causing a clear spring of water to gush forth. This spot also was marked by a small tope, and the spring still existed, and had healing powers of great reputation. The people had always called it the Arrow spring."⁶⁵

Q. No. 40 :- The fact that king Ripu Malla of Nag dynasty who ruled over one of the two states which flourished from the eleventh to the fifteenth century in the Karnali region of Nepal with the present village of Dullu as his capital visited Lumbini and Niglihawa in the year 1312 proves that upto that time Kapilavastu was a well known place of pilgrimage and retained its glory.⁶⁶

Ans. No. 40 :- The above statement does not make a mention of Kapilavastu. In what way Ripu Malla's visit to Lumbini and Niglihwa is connected with Kapilavastu is not intelligible.

Q. No. 41 :- That Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang have made no mention of Piprahwa should also be taken into account.⁶⁷

Ans. No. 41 :- Tilaurakot too does not find a place in the account of the Chinese pilgrims.

Q. No. 42 :- Piprahwa might be the birth-place of Krakuchchanda Buddha and that the Sakya brethren, sisters and wives could see no better place than this for depositing the relics of the Master, thus making a link between the two Buddhas.⁶⁸

Ans. No. 42 :- The birth-place of Krakuchchanda Buddha was, according to the travel documents of Hiuen Tsang, at a distance of about ten miles from Kapilavastu. He records, "To the south of the city going 50 li or so, we come to an old town where there is a *stupa*. This is the place where Krakuchchanda Buddha was born."⁶⁹ Similar is the translation by T. Watters who says, "To the south of the city, he tells us, and at a distance of above 50 li (about ten miles) from it, was an old city with a tope. This was the birth-place of the past Buddha *Kalo-ka-tsun-te* (that is, Krakuchunda or Krakuchhanda, the Kakusandha of the pali scriptures)."⁷⁰

Q. No. 43 :- On the basis of the accounts of Hiuen Tsang Kapilavastu must be a big town and Piprahwa can be a small village of that State.⁷¹

Ans. No. 43 :- A town and a village of that State should not be confused. In order to substantiate the argument that Piprahwa was not Kapilavastu but simply a small village of that State (Tilaurakot) adequate evidence will have to be presented.

Q. No. 44 :- Is it not interesting to note that Mr. Srivastava discovered terracotta Buddha heads alongwith his father's palace possibly to show a father's desire to make an image of his son?⁷²

Ans. No. 44 :- It has not been written anywhere that the terracotta Buddha heads came from the palace of his father. There is also a wide gap between the dates of the two. The provenance also is not the same. Before raising the question, the scholar should have gone through the article critically and not carelessly.

Q. No. 45 :- Even a falsehood if repeated a thousand times can be more effective than the truth not expressed at all according to historian Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, ⁷³

Ans. No 45 :- Before making such a statement concrete proof to identify Tilaurakot with Kapilavastu will have to be presented. Just as the author has brought to light the evidences yielded by the excavations at Piprahwa/Ganwaria, the excavators of Tilaurakot will also have to produce their antiquities to convince the people around the world. It will not be out of place to point out that the claims of Tilaurakot for Kapilavastu are based simply on the continuous repetition of them since 1896 without any corroboration by the excavation.

With all the explanations given to the queries mentioned above the author believes that the inkling of doubts, to whatever extent they might have been, on the identification of Piprahwa/Ganwaria with Kapilavastu will wither away. Of course, certain scholars may still take some time to adjust to the latest findings on account of the century-old beliefs, which had naturally taken deep roots, but the facts cannot be ignored.



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1875

1876

1877



Plate I PIPRAHWA — Stupa which yielded the relic caskets



Plate II PIPRAHWA — Soapstone relic casket in the northern chamber



Plate III PIPRAHWA — Soapstone relic casket in the southern chamber

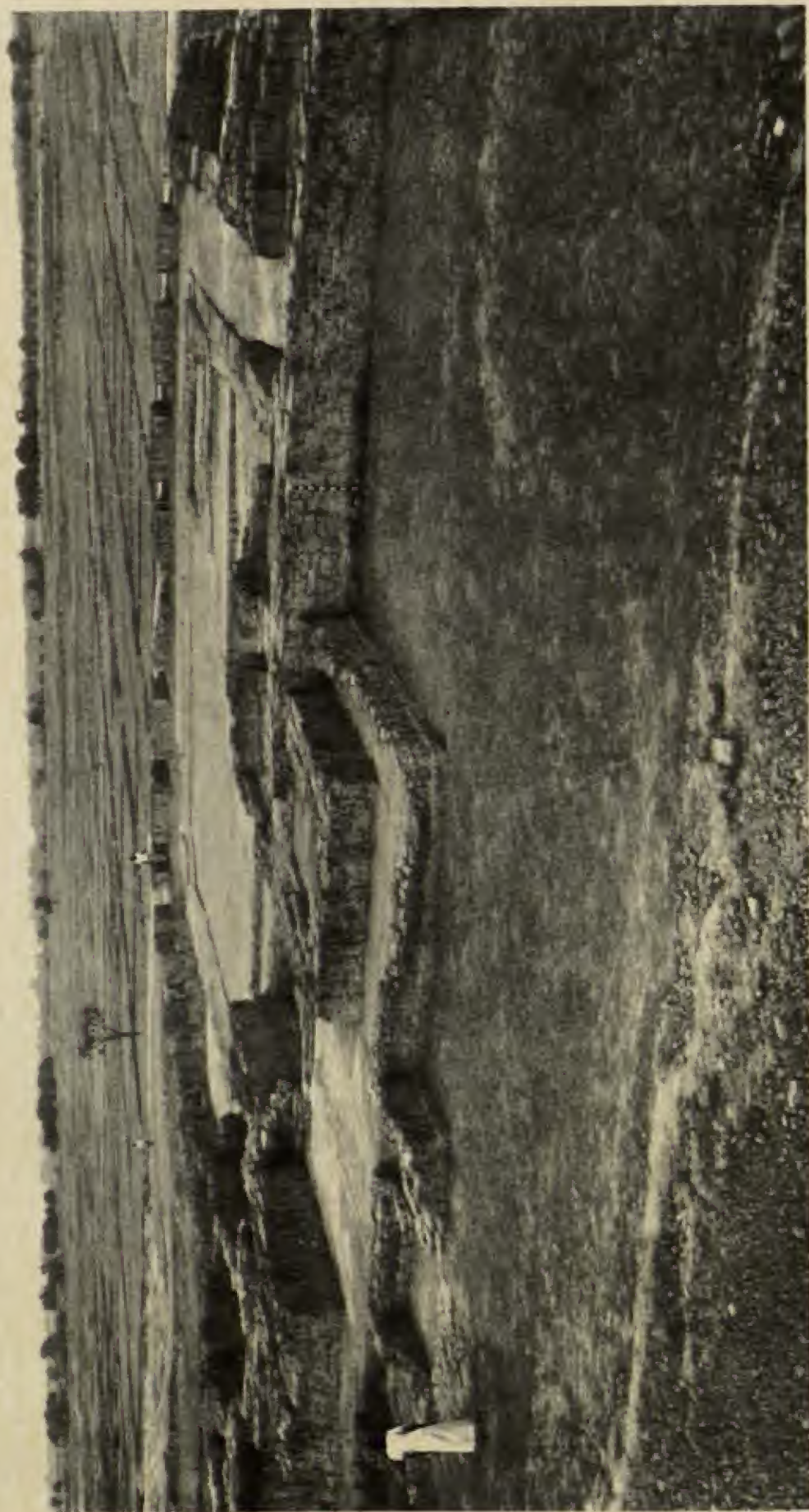


Plate IV PIPRAHWA — Eastern monastery which yielded the terracotta sealings



Plate V A PIPRAHWA — Terracotta sealings with the legend KAPILAVASTU



Plate V B PIPRAHWA — Lid of a pot with the legend KAPILAVASTU



Plate VI A GANWARIA — Larger structural-complex



Plate VI B GANWARIA -- Smaller structural-complex



Plate VII A GANWARIA — Drain in the larger structural-complex



Plate VII B GANWARIA — Five structural phases in the larger structural-complex

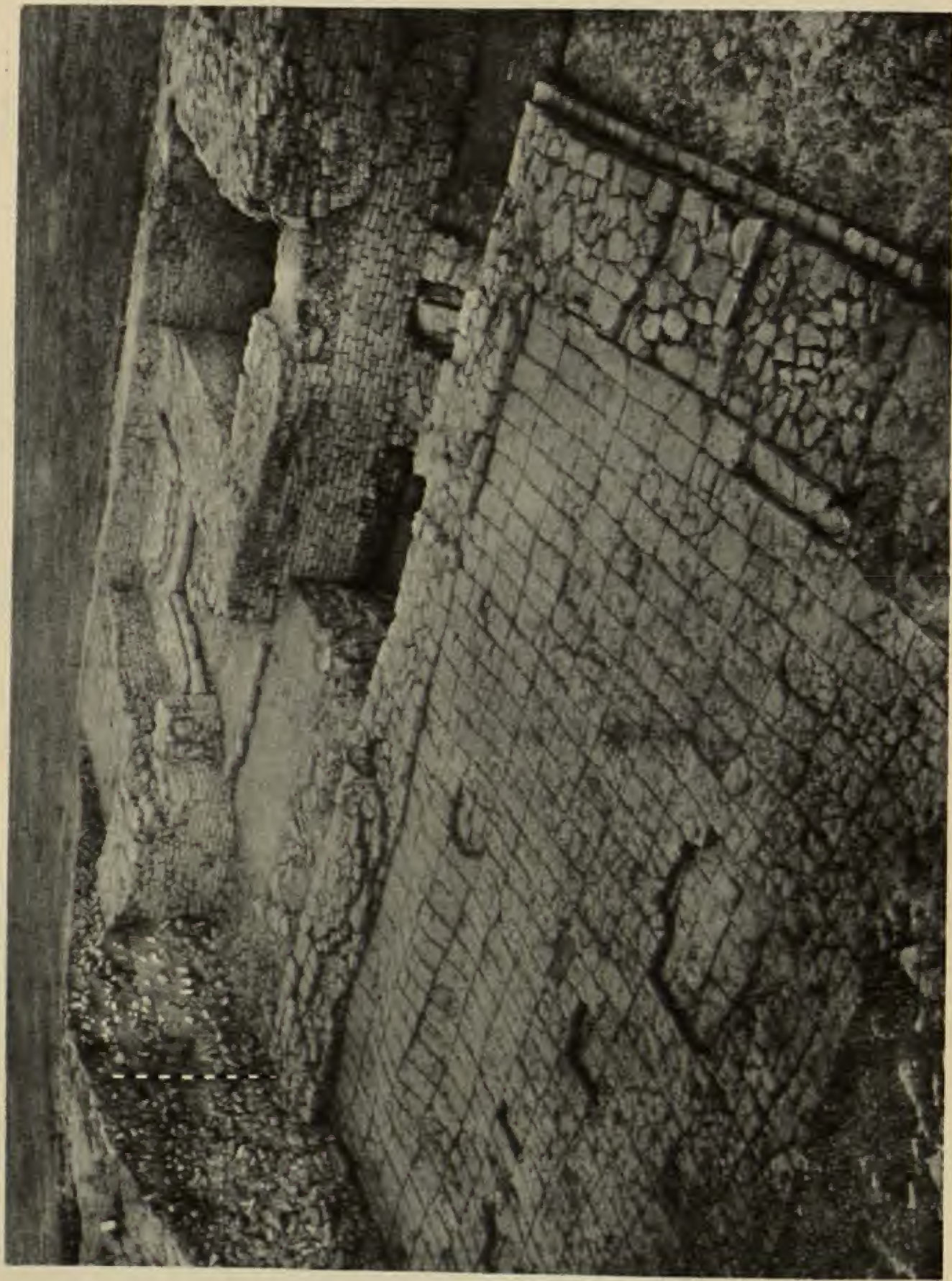


Plate VIII GANWARIA — Brick-paved courtyard in the smaller structural-complex



Plate IX A GANWARIA -- Entrance to the school (?) type structure



Plate IX B GANWARIA — Drain in the school (?) type structure



Plate X GANWARIA — House-complex



Plate XI GANWARIA — Cistern-like structure



Plate XII GANWARIA — Second shrine



Plate XIII A GANWARIA — Stone disk



Plate XIII B GANWARIA — Dishes with red rim and grey interior



Plate XIV A GANWARIA* — Painted pottery



Plate XIV B GANWARIA — Terracotta head exhibiting foreign influence



Plate XV GANWARIA — Head of Buddha in terracotta



Plate XVI GANWARIA — Seated Buddha in terracotta



Plate XVII GANWARIA — Terracotta female figurines



Plate XVIII A GANWARIA — Terracotta dancing figurines



Plate XVIII B GANWARIA — Terracotta human figurines



Plate XIX A GANWARIA — Terracotta animal figurines

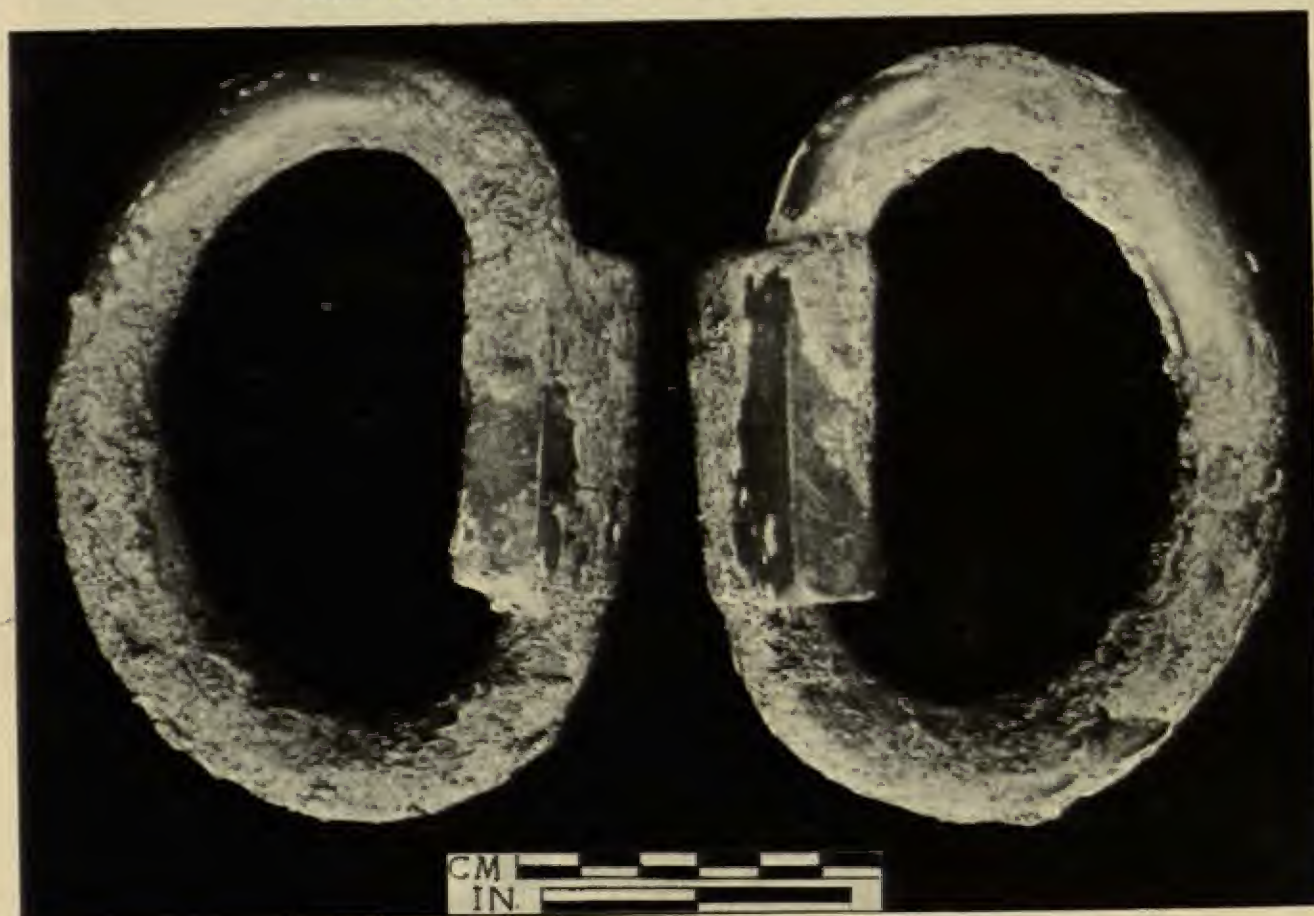


Plate XIX B GANWARIA — Heavy anklets (?) in copper alloy

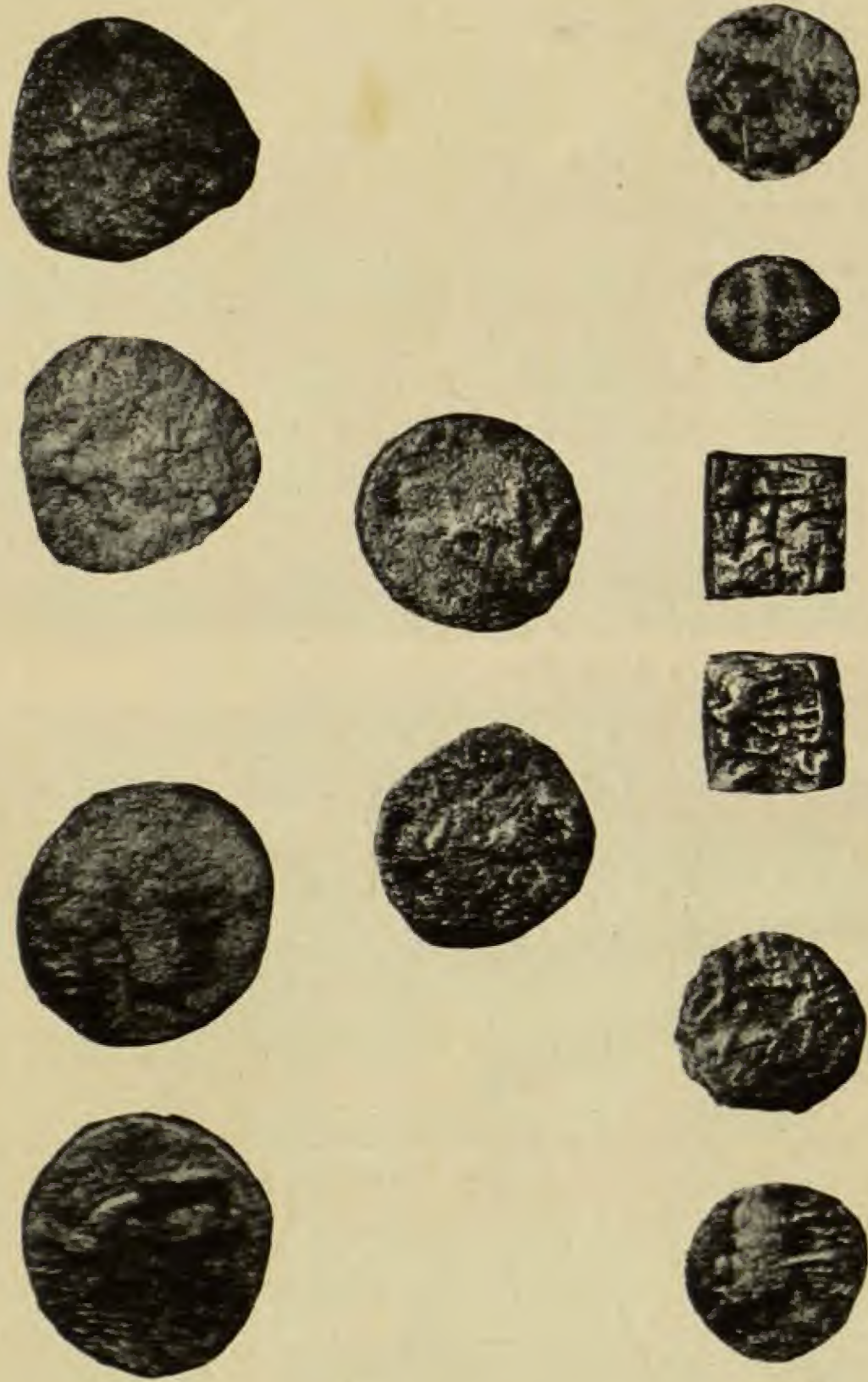


Plate XX PIPRAHWA and GANWARIA -- Copper and silver coins

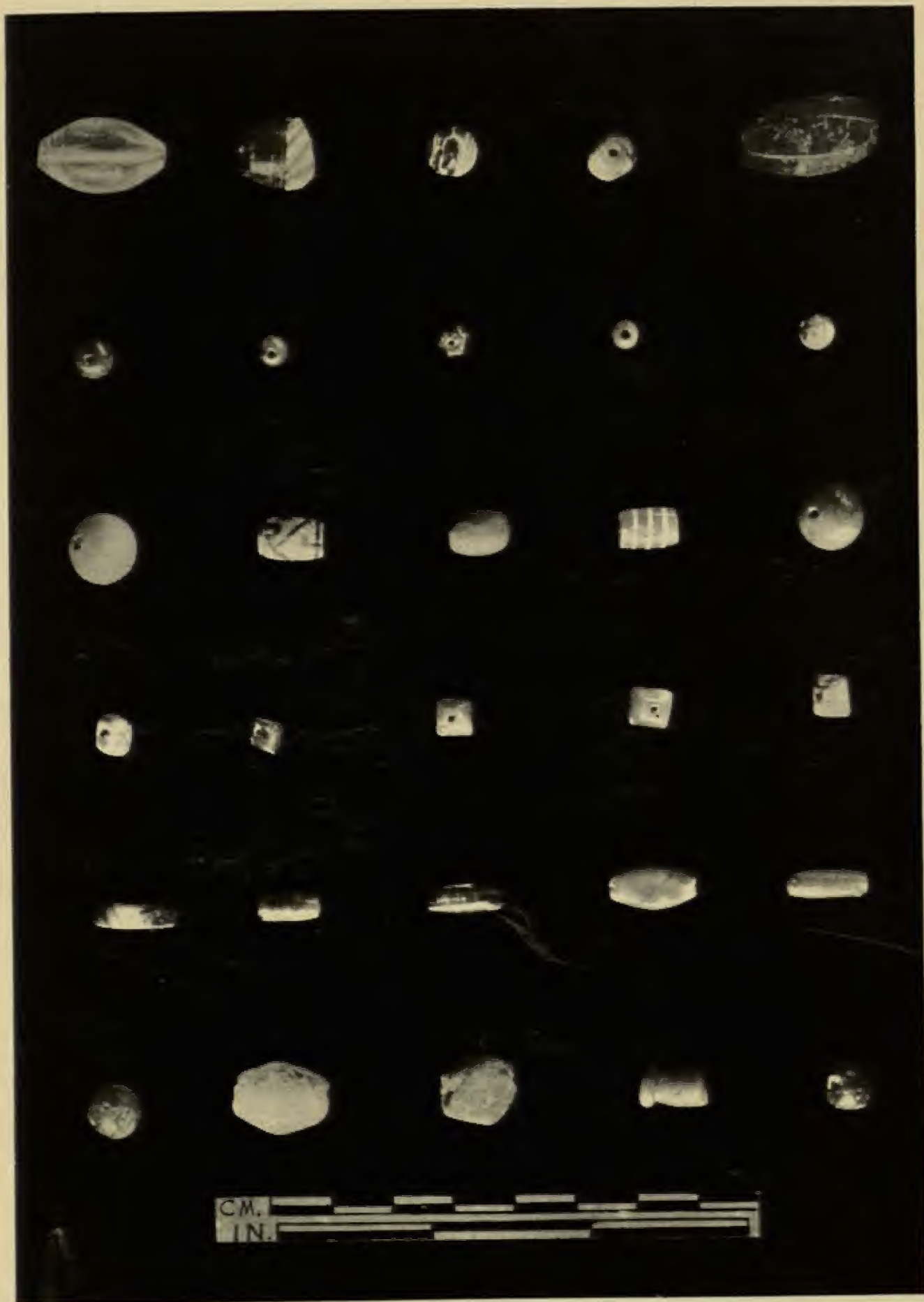


Plate XXI GANWARIA -- Beads

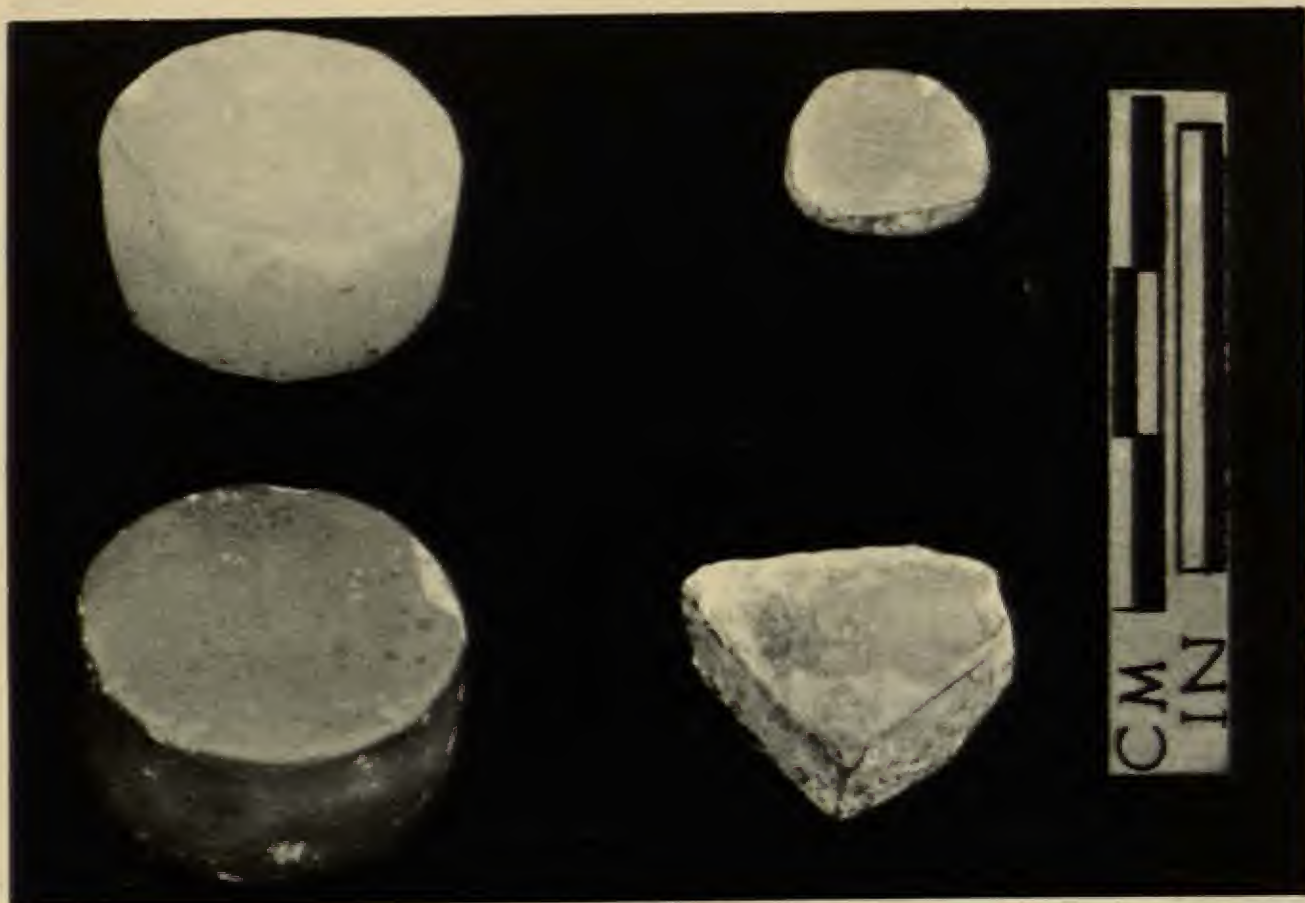


Plate XXII A GANWARIA — Stone weights

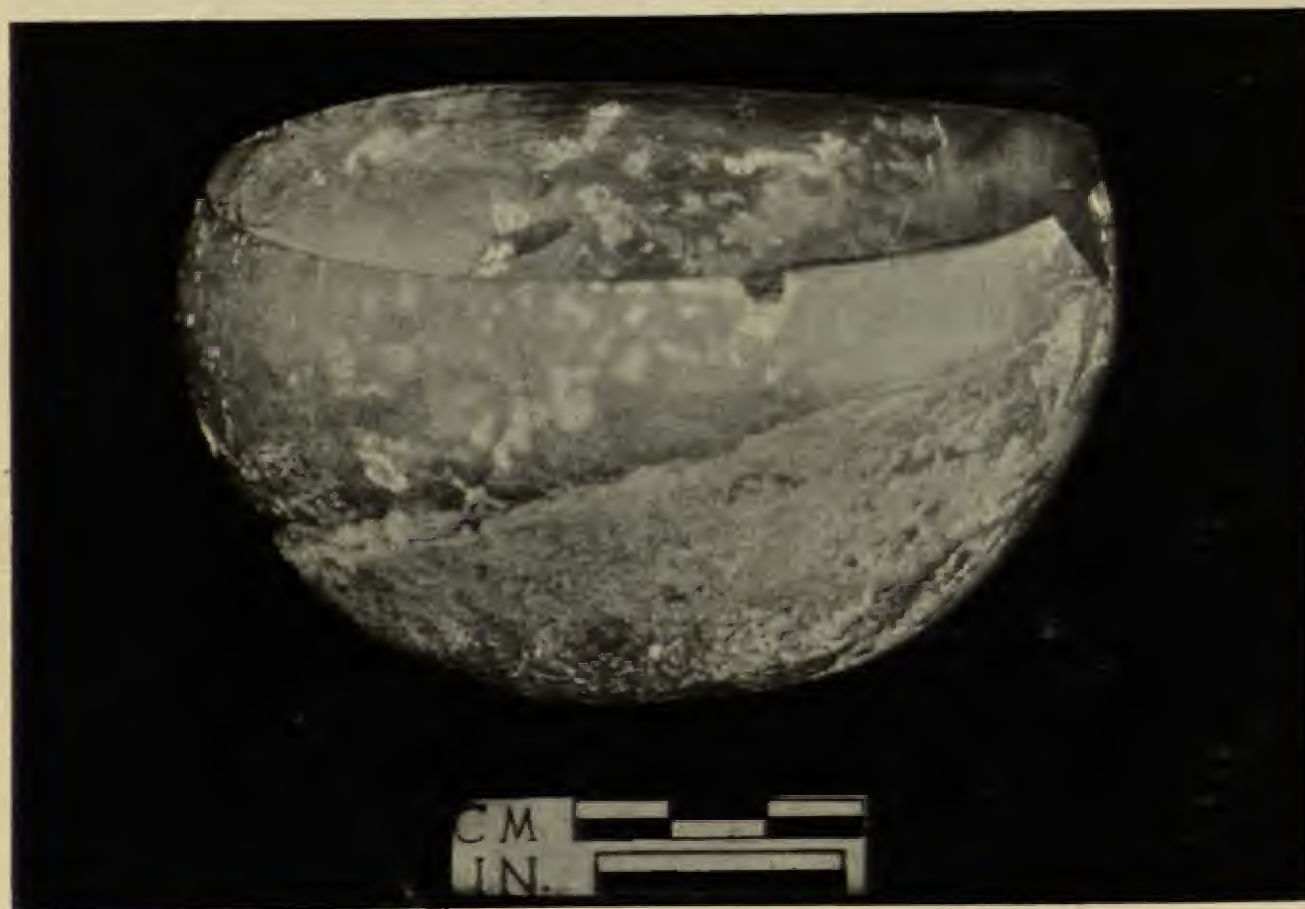
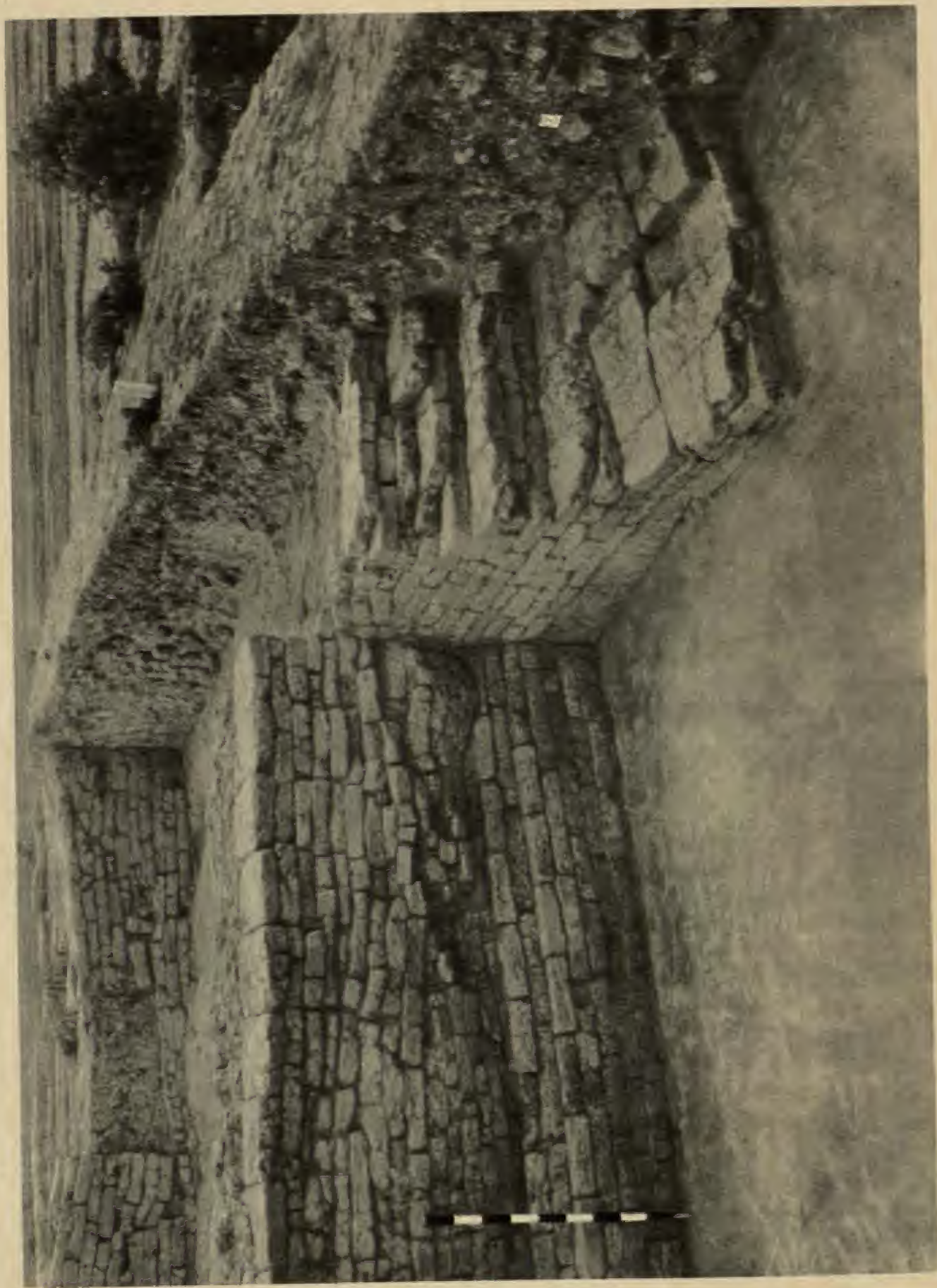


Plate XXII B PIPRAHWA — Copper bowl



Plare XXIII SALARGARH — Approach to the monastery

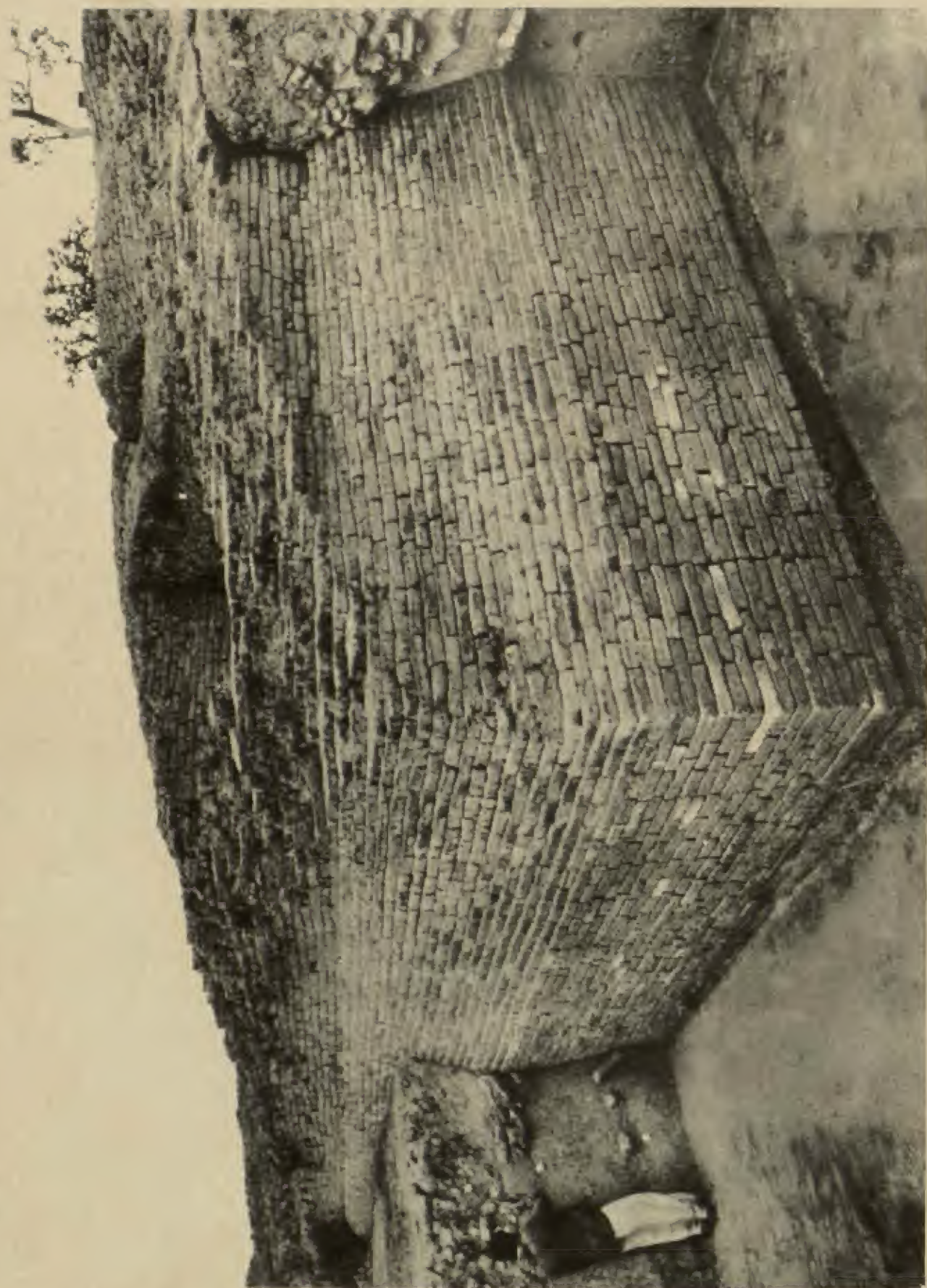


Plate XXIV PIPRAHWA — Eastern monastery published in Dharmayug in 1973





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